

Peter. Vale
Presented By
Consistory

First Christian Reformed Church
Hull, Iowa.

April 27, 1958.

Rev. H. C. Van Zellen
Pastor.

—

Exposition of Reformed Doctrine

A POPULAR EXPLANATION OF THE
MOST ESSENTIAL TEACHINGS OF
THE REFORMED CHURCHES

By
REV. M. J. BOSMA

SIXTH EDITION



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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

REV. M. J. BOSMA. To know him was to love him, and those who knew him best loved him most. He was a manly man, every inch of him, and a lovable Christian withal.

And so, while we feel sad because he left us for the shining shore, we are glad to have met and known him, and to write a brief sketch of his life is a task made easy because love inspires in its performance.

Of sturdy Groninger stock our friend and brother was. His father, John M. Bosma, of Grootevast, and his mother, Pieterke Hofman, of Leens, came to the United States shortly after their marriage in 1873. In the next year, May 21, their first born, Menno, came to gladden their humble home on Sheldon Avenue, near Shelby Street, in Grand Rapids. The child was baptized by the Rev. G. E. Boer, then pastor of the Spring street congregation, now the First church. He received his first instruction in the tongue of his fathers from Mr. D. DeBoer, who taught Dutch in a little school on Eastern Avenue, where the Christian Reformed church is now located, and later attended the Henry Avenue school, in which he finished the eighth grade. The lad then entered the employment of Peck Bros., druggists, and faithfully he served, so that this firm to this day speaks in a commendatory way of "Ben" Bosma.

But God had something better for him in store than to dispense medicine for the body as the druggists do. He put it into his heart to desire the office of a steward of the mysteries of the Kingdom of God and to be a dispenser of the "Balm of Gilead." From his infancy the fear of God seems to have been in his heart, and while comparatively young he made confession of faith during the ministry of Rev. S. B. Sevensma, "the pastor of his youth," as he affectionately calls him in the dedication of his "Onderwijzing in de Geref. Geloofsleer." It was after he had made confession that he told his father of his desire to become a minister. And although it took a great deal of planning and continual saving

to carry him through his student days, yet the father as well as the son was willing to make the sacrifice. And so we find that the Yearbook for 1895 states him as enrolled with: W. Borgman, K. Bush, J. Jonkman, J. Rienstra, L. Veltkamp, G. D. Gerritsen, L. Burggraaf, and David Adams. His earnest study enabled him to finish the seven years course in six years' time and consequently he graduated in June, 1900, as a candidate for the ministry, together with the brethren L. Berkhof, L. P. Brink, J. E. De Groot, R. Diephuis, H. Keegstra, and J. L. Van Tielen.

The Broadway church of Grand Rapids, in whose pulpit and catechism room he had already labored acceptably, ardently desired him as its pastor, and in September, 1900, he was ordained as such.

During the summer of 1910 Rev. Bosma was delegated East to represent our Church at the General Synod of the Reformed Church in America, and it was on this eastern journey that he caught a severe cold. His system, already undermined by too much activity, was unable to ward off the germs of disease, and tuberculosis developed.

December, 1910, he left for Denver, Colorado, in the hope of recuperating, but pneumonia aggravated his case and accelerated the spread of his fatal disease, so that June, 1911, he was compelled to resign as pastor of the Third church of Kalamazoo.

He was seated on his porch in his chair, where he had spent so many, many months, when the messenger of God, the death angel, beckoned him. Without a warning his heart ceased to beat and before he realized what dying meant, he had already come to an end of the Valley of Shadows, which, for God's people ends in the everlasting sunshine of God's presence.

May the LORD, whom our brother served and in whom he died, bestow His rich and indispensable blessing on this work for years to come.

HENRY BEETS

Grand Rapids, Mich., Aug. 27, 1927

P R E F A C E

The consciousness of a growing need of a book of the kind that is hereby offered to the public, has impelled the author to diffidently attempt to supply the need. In his own circle and outside the question was often asked: What book can we study to better acquaint ourselves with Reformed Doctrines in the American language? To this question no satisfactory answer could be given. The books that might be recommended are either too large and too technical or are in method of treatment so different from the usual method followed in our circles that they are not appreciated. What was sought was a book that treated Reformed Doctrine, especially of a Dutch type, in a form that is simple and easily comprehended, and in a method that is in harmony with the traditional methods in vogue among our Reformed people. As our people Americanize they want the sound teachings of their ancestors in a new language, and it is advisable that the same terms for the expression of religious truths be in use in our American circles as are employed in our Holland circles. Unity, harmony, and sympathy among the various parts of the same Church demand this. And since no work thus far meets these requirements, the author has felt called to attempt to furnish what he and others have so painfully lacked thus far.

The professional theologian will readily see that the author can make no claim to originality. He gladly confesses that what he offers is more a compilation from the various sources than an original scientific product. The broad field of Reformed Theology has been so well cultivated that a young man, writing only a popular treatise, could not dare to make any claim of originality. The purpose has not been to write a theological text book, but rather to furnish a source of information for the average membership of our churches. No peculiar theories have been prominently advanced, but the aim has been to present as objectively as possible the truths held and officially recognized in the Reformed Churches.

Instead of casting the contents of the various parts into

the form of a discourse it has seemed most wise to employ questions and answers and then to extend the answers till a clear presentation of the subject was reached. The questions help to fix the mind on the precise nature of the subject, and they also aided the author to secure the needed quality of brevity. By following the usual order of Reformed Dogmatics the most systematic treatment was secured, and by the use of the index and of the subject index in the rear of the book, this work can be profitably used in connection with any book of catechetical instruction.

No serious efforts have been made to combat the views held by non-Reformed teachers of religious truths; only when modern surroundings seemed to make it absolutely necessary, and when the Reformed view could best be brought out by contrasting it with other views has space been given to the presentation and refutation of other teachings.

There is in many circles a growing laxity of seriousness in Christian life, and to the attentive observer this is the result and accompaniment of laxity in doctrine. Doctrines are the basis of our religious convictions. Where they are ignored or rejected, vagueness and indifference must result. To help save our growing generations from the maelstrom of indifference and of false teachings that author has hopefully labored to gather the contents of this book.

The author wishes to acknowledge his heartiest thanks to *Revs. J. W. Brink* and *H. Beets* for their readiness to read his manuscript and for their valuable suggestions offered to him.

Aware that imperfections of various kinds attach to this work, it is with hesitation offered to the public. May our Lord and Master make the good it contains to be useful in the home and the class room for the culture of faith and the coming of His glorious Kingdom.

M. J. B.

Grand Rapids, May 29, 1907

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INTRODUCTION

What is Reformed Doctrine?

Reformed Doctrine is that system of the truths of divine revelation, obtained from the teachings of the Word of God, which the Reformed Churches have declared to be the expression of their faith and have as such embodied in their Standards.

These Standards are the 37 Articles of the Belgic or Netherland Confession of Faith, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of the Synod of Dordrecht, 1618-19.

A doctrine, also called a dogma, is not a mere conjecture, or a private opinion, but it is a statement of fact declared by God, a formulated proposition of the teaching of the word of God on any point.

The private opinion some one in the Reformed Churches may hold is not therefore Reformed Doctrine; to be this, it must have been authoritatively recognized by the Reformed Churches, as the faith of these Churches.

Is the knowledge of Reformed Doctrine very necessary for us?

Yes, indeed. To understand and to love the Reformed Church, her teachings must be known, and a very strong type of Christian life will result from the proper appreciation of the Reformed system of doctrine. In many circles there is a decrying of all doctrines, which are presented as fetters to the freedom of thought. This view results from a misunderstanding of the meaning of doctrines; they do not limit our thought, but declare to us what past generations have found to be the teaching of God's word, and if we love this word, the doctrines formulated by our Church will be appreciated by

us as the expression of our own conviction and they thus will be the banner of our faith.

No thinking person lives without some idea as to the value of religious teachings, and for us who have learned the meaning of our own Church's teachings, they are the molding thoughts of our religious life.

What other name is often given to the doctrines contained in our Reformed Creed?

They are often called Calvinistic, because they were in the days of the Reformation first systematically advanced by the great reformer, John Calvin.

What is the source of Reformed Doctrine?

The Holy Scriptures or the word of God.

The accepted standards of the Church are not the source of Reformed doctrines, they are formulated statements of these doctrines, which have been obtained from the teachings of Scripture.

Divine revelation has been historically and gradually given to the Church on earth, and so the teachings of God on any one point are often scattered throughout the whole Bible. The Reformed Churches have summed up and systematized this teaching in their doctrines.

Our doctrines are, therefore, binding on us, because they are the teachings of God's word, wherein God has revealed himself to us and has declared the relations of the creatures to himself. This divine revelation has made possible our systematic view of the truth.

Do all christians accept our view of divine revelation?

No, a difference of view as to the meaning of divine revelation has caused the christians to be divided into various groups. There are three main groups. Protestants, Roman Catholics and Greek Orthodox.*

Among the Protestants there are again various bod-

ies, as the Reformed, Lutherans, Baptists, Methodists, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, etc. The principal Reformed Churches in this country are the Reformed Church in the U. S., formerly known as German Reformed; the Reformed Church in America, formerly known as Dutch Reformed; and the Christian Reformed Church. The last two are both of Dutch origin. All these groups have certain creeds in common, known as the Eucumenical creeds: the Apostles' creed, and those of Nicea, Chalcedon and Athanasius. Besides these, nearly every group or denomination has its own peculiar expression of faith.

Which are the principal non-christian systems of religion?

Judaism, Mohammedanism, and various forms of heathen religion as Confucianism, Buddhism, Fetishism, etc.

None of these know of God as revealed in Christ, and cannot, therefore, direct its followers in the way of eternal life.

These non-christian religions are often known as false religions; they are a perversion of the divinely revealed religion.

All true religion needs a condescending revelation of God to man. This was originally given, and has been preserved for us in the Bible. The heathen have lost this revelation, and are now wandering in darkness. The original desire of man for worship of God is not, however, entirely lost; there is still a need of God and a seeking after him. In their darkness, different heathen come to different ideas of God and of the proper method of serving him. Usually some great mind among them gives direction to the popular religious life, especially if his teaching be in harmony with the main tendency of a people's character.

All non-christian religions are unfit for world-wide acceptance; they are by their very nature bound to certain localities, and will, in course of time, be discarded in favor of christianity.

What main divisions must we make in treating our Reformed Doctrine?

A proper treatment requires the following division:

Chapter I—The Sources of our Knowledge of God.

Chapter II—The Doctrine of God.

Chapter III—The Doctrine of Man.

Chapter IV—The Doctrine of Christ.

Chapter V—The Doctrine of Salvation.

Chapter VI—The Doctrine of the Church.

Chapter VII—The Doctrine of the Means of Grace.

Chapter VIII—The Doctrine of the Last Things.

* The religious membership of the world, as given in The World Almanac for 1927, is as follows:

Roman Catholics.....	273,500,000
Orthodox Catholics.....	121,800,000
Protestants	170,900,000
Jews	15,580,000
Mohammedans	219,000,000
Buddhists	135,000,000
Hindus	210,400,000
Confucianists and Taoists.....	301,155,000
Shintoists	20,500,000
Animists	136,300,000
Miscellaneous	16,300,000
Total Christians.....	566,200,000
Total Non-Christians	1033,500,000

PROTESTANT GROUPS IN U. S.

Total Lutherans (20 bodies).....	2,588,000
Baptists (14 bodies).....	8,670,000
Methodists (15 bodies).....	8,968,000
Protestant Episcopal	1,173,000
Presbyterians (9 bodies).....	2,610,000
Reformed in U. S., congregations.....	1,735
Communicants	349,711
Reformed in America (Dutch Ref.), congregations.....	734
Communicants	148,536
Christian Reformed, congregations.....	255
Communicants	48,777

CHAPTER I

SOURCES OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

KNOWLEDGE OF GOD FROM NATURE

Is there more than one source of our knowledge of God?

Yes, we have a twofold revelation of God, one given in nature, and the other in Scripture, sometimes known as a general and a special revelation.

This twofold revelation is eminently adapted to man's need and the capacity, that man might know something of his God, and his will. Of course, God's revelation of himself is not a full expression of himself, for in God is an infinite fulness of perfection, which is greater than God can reveal to us, and than we are capable of receiving. But God has given us a revelation of himself, sufficient for us to honor and enjoy him.

Are there some who deny that God can be known?

The Atheist even denies the very existence of God.

The Agnosticist professes not to be able to know whether there is a God or not, he declares God is unknowable.

The Pantheist identifies God and the world. He claims there is no personal God who can be known by us as distinct from the world.

How may the knowledge of God from nature be distinguished?

As innate and acquired knowledge.

By innate knowledge, we mean a natural intuitive impression in our souls that there is a God, so that we,

upon first hearing of him, naturally consent to believe there is a Supreme Being. This innate knowledge is not a clear idea of God, nor is it the result of reasoning, it is rather the capacity to know God, and the spontaneous recognition that there must be a God. This innate knowledge fits man for the reception of the revealed knowledge.

The acquired knowledge is that which we have gained from God's revelation in nature, from all material things, from the laws and forces of nature, from the history of the past, as well as from all the intellectual and moral qualities in ourselves and others.

Ps. 19:1: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork."

Romans 1:19, 20: "Because that which is known of God is manifest in them; for God manifested it unto them. For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity."

Acts 14:17: "And yet he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave you from heaven, rains and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness."

How do we argue to prove from nature that there is a God?

1. When we behold the world with its various changes we conclude there must be a first cause to have produced this world, this first cause we believe to be a wise, powerful, benevolent Supreme Being: God.

2. The system order and beauty of the world and all its parts, persuade us that there is an intelligent

Supreme Being, who governs everything according to a definite purpose.

3. Our moral sensibilities, that is, our conscience, our sense of right and wrong, our feeling of responsibility, our fear of death, our conviction that right must triumph—all leads us to the persuasion that there is One who has created and maintains our moral order.

4. The irrepressible tendency in human nature to believe in some mysterious superintending power, with the result that among all kinds of people there is some form of religious worship.

5. The existence of the Bible can never be accounted for if there be no God, for its contents is beyond the invention of man.

Are these arguments convincing for everybody?

No, they do not convince those who will not or cannot see their force. But the existence of God and our faith in Him does not depend on our ability to furnish indisputable evidence to sinful reason of man that God exists. To the unbiased mind, which has no preconceived theory, it is most natural to believe that God is; and for the sanctified mind, which looks upon nature in the light of special revelation, the whole world is full of the glory of God. Our conviction that God is, comes first of all from the faith in his word, though the christian does appreciate the above arguments.

The revelation of God in nature does not speak to us of Christ, of grace and salvation. Therefore, to know God unto salvation, we need a special revelation.

KNOWLEDGE OF GOD FROM THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

Wherein is God's special revelation contained?

In the Holy Scriptures, or the Bible.

How did God grant us this special revelation?

Through various revelations of himself to man, and through inspiration of the writers of the books of the Bible.

His revelation was given in various ways; through dreams, visions, appearances of angels, direct communication, inward suggestion, and by the appearance of Christ in the flesh.

Heb. 1:1, 2: "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son."

At this point it is well to note the difference between revelation and inspiration. Through revelation, God made known himself and his truth to those whom this revelation was granted; through inspiration, God infallibly guided the writers of the Scriptures to write his revelation, and thereby to preserve it for every age. Sometimes revelation and inspiration were enjoyed by the same person, sometimes, however, revelation was granted to one person and later committed to writing by another person, inspired for this purpose.

Was God's revelation always preserved in writing?

No, Moses was the first inspired writer, about 1500 before Christ. Before his time, the knowledge of God's revelation was preserved by tradition from one generation to another. People were fewer in number, lived longer, and were less scattered, so that it was then more possible to preserve the truth of revelation by tradition than it would be now. The other inspired writers were Prophets, Apostles, and Evangelists, who wrote the Old Testament in Hebrew, and the New Testament in Greek.

What did God do in inspiring the writers of the Bible?

Through the working of the Holy Spirit, he prompted them to write, informed them what to write, and directed them in the use of the exact words required.

II Pet. 1:21: "For no prophecy ever came by the will of man; but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit."

Did the Holy Spirit cause each writer to express himself in the same way?

No, the Spirit gives to each person peculiar natural qualities, and he made use of each person's qualities when he inspired him. The writers were not mere tools or machines used by the Spirit, as if their minds and hands were used unconscious to themselves. They consciously wrote as they did, and upon all they wrote was the stamp of each person's peculiarity. David was privileged with poetical gifts, and therefore, the Spirit caused him to express in poetical language the truth of God; his writings are different in style from those of Paul, whose style is again expressive of his character.

Why do we believe all the books of the Bible to have been inspired?

I. Because of their own witness to this fact.

II Pet. 1:21: "For no prophecy ever came by the will of man, but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit."

II Tim. 3:16: "Every Scripture is inspired of God, and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness."

2. Because the Jews generally in the time of Christ's sojourn on earth, held the view that their sacred writings had been produced by men divinely inspired. In

addressing those holding such an estimate of those writings, Christ never cautioned them on this account, but, on the contrary, sanctioned their belief. Christ as well as the Apostles accepted the Old Testament as the word of God.

Matt. 4:4: "But he answered and said: It is written."

Luke 24:27: "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself."

See Matt. 5:17,18; 8:4; 11:10; 12:3,5,40,42; 15:3,4,7; 21:13,42; 22:29,31,43-45; 26:24. Mark 7:6,7,10,13. John 5:39,46; 13:18. Acts 7:38. Rom. 3:2; 4:3; 10:11. I Cor. 15:27,28. Gal. 3:11,12. Eph. 4:8,9. Heb. 2:8; 8:13; 12:27. I Pet. 1:10,11. II Pet. 1:20,21.

As to the Scriptures of the New Testament, Christ promised his disciples the Holy Spirit to lead them into all truth.

John 14:26: "But the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all I said unto you."

Luke 10:16: "He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that rejecteth you, rejecteth me." Acts 2:4; Gal. 1:8; I Thess. 2:13. The teachings of the apostles were not less divine than that of Christ himself, for they were guided into all truth by the Holy Spirit, who can make no mistake.

3. Because of their contents and influence.

Here we would mention the prophecies and types of the Old Testament, fulfilled in the New; the mysteries of the holy Trinity, the union of the divine and human natures in Christ, the plan of salvation, and other mysteries beyond the reach of human invention. Further, the fact that the Bible contains nothing but truth, with

no mixture of error, and is a perfect guide for faith and morals, far superior to the writings of any human being.

The contents also shows that it is a whole, a unity. Written by over forty writers, during more than fifteen hundred years, in three languages, by men on every plane of social life, from shepherd and fisherman to kings; the books, nevertheless, form a unity. Back of the human hands we must, therefore, recognize the Master-mind of God.

The influence of the Bible, saving, purifying and transforming human lives, also proves that it is the word of God, the instrument of the Holy Spirit. Many efforts have been made to destroy the Bible, but it has a mightier hold on the world now than ever before.

4. Because of the testimony of the Holy Spirit to the heart of the believer, confirming the teaching of the Scriptures.

John 7:17: "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself."

I John 5:7: "And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is the truth."

By the testimony of the Holy Spirit, we mean that the Holy Spirit speaks to us through the Scriptures and by his leading of our lives, confirms the teachings of the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit and the Scriptures agree in everything, because the teachings of the Scriptures are originally those of the Holy Spirit. In their description of the sinner, of the way of salvation, of Christian life, etc., the Scriptures harmonize exactly with what the Holy Spirit causes God's people to see and experience in their own lives. Thus the testimony of the Holy Spirit confirms the Scriptures and the more the Spirit controls us the more will we agree with the Bible.

For an unbeliever this argument may have little weight, because he is a stranger to the working of the Holy Spirit in his heart.

How must he, therefore, value the Bible?

As God's word. It is not sufficient to say: God's word is in the Bible, because this statement leaves room for the idea that part of the Bible is not God's word, and if it is not, who will determine what is inspired and what is not? This would leave us no certainty. We recognize that not all contained in the Bible was originally spoken by God, there are e. g., words of Satan and of evil men in Scripture, but the writers of the Scriptures were inspired to write even these down.

Because they are God's word the Scriptures are the only infallible rule of faith and life, and in every sphere of life they must have supreme authority.

How many books does the Bible contain?

Sixty-six: 39 in the Old Testament, and 27 in the New Testament.

The 39 of the Old Testament contain 17 historical, 6 poetical and 16 prophetical books. The 27 of the New Testament contain 5 historical books, 21 epistles and 1 prophetical book.

What do these books together form?

The Canon — Canon means rule — and canonical books contain the infallible rule of faith and life.

The Roman Catholic Church has added to these canonical books, others known as Apocryphal, old writings, which date from a time near that of the origin of the canonical. The Protestant Churches have rejected these as not being of divine authority, because they were not accepted by the Jewish and early Christian

church, and because they contain errors and statements contrary to the teachings of the canonical books.*

Are the Scriptures plain or obscure?

They are plain in those things needed for salvation. There are mysteries in God's word, which we can know, but never entirely comprehend, as the doctrine of the Trinity, etc.; there are other things difficult to understand, but they are, nevertheless, plainly revealed, and with the illumination of the Spirit, can be understood, if we will diligently study. In the things needed for salvation the Scriptures are, however, very comprehensible for all of average intelligence.

Is the careful reading and study of the Bible necessary?

Indeed it is, for God has not revealed himself and the way of salvation for us in anything else as he has in the Bible.

A very good custom is the reading of the Bible at stated times, at family worship, and at other times, collectively and individually. May our succeeding generations continue the good custom of our forefathers in this respect. Our lives will then be informed, nourished, and strengthened by the word of God.

It is a serious mistake to let the reading of other literature rob us of our time and inclination to read the Bible. We then neglect the best, to content ourselves with the poorer and often the worst.

But as we read, may we ever remember the need of

* The Apocrypha (from a Greek word signifying "hidden things") are usually given as 16 books, viz: 1 and 2 Esdras; Tobit; Judith; the rest of Esther; The Wisdom of Solomon; Ecclesiasticus; Baruch with the Epistle of Jeremiah; The Song of Manasses; 1, 2, 3 and 4 Maccabees.

Sometimes the number is limited to 14, 3 and 4 Maccabees being omitted.

the Holy Spirit to illuminate our minds, that we may appreciate the riches before us; sincere prayer must accompany Bible reading.

Ps. 119:105: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." John 20:31; I Cor. 2:6-16.

When and by whom were the English translations of the Bible made?

The Authorized or King James' Version was completed in 1611. This translation was made by fifty-four English scholars, who were appointed by King James the First.

Before this, translations had been made into English, the principal ones of which were those of Wycliffe, 1382, and of Tyndale, 1526. These two translations were not allowed to be spread by the clergy of the Roman Catholic Church. Many who bought them were persecuted, and Tyndale himself was put to death as a martyr, while his Bibles were sought out and publicly burned. The Bibles of Wycliffe and Tyndale, however, had greatly changed public opinion, and paved the way for an open and free distribution of the Bible, so that only a few years after Tyndale's death, the Bible was first published by royal authority, 1539. Other versions were those of Coverdale, Matthews, and Taverner. These versions, as well as the later King James' Version, were based on Tyndale's translation.

The King James' version has been the popular Bible of all English speaking people to this day. It is beautiful for its simple Anglo-Saxon and its purity of language. But since it was published, in the early part of the seventeenth century, many of its expressions are a little obsolete. Because of this, and particularly because there have been discovered more ancient manuscripts

of the Bible than the translators of the King James' Version had in their day, and which are considered more trustworthy than later manuscripts, and also because of the better understanding of the original languages in our day, it was deemed advisable to again have a new version. The movement for this was started in England in 1870; a company of 65 English and 34 American scholars of various denominations began the new translation, and finished it in 1885. This is known as the English revised version.

In 1891 the American scholars of the joint committee published a revision, incorporating the readings and renderings proposed by them, and which the English revisers had not adopted in the text, but printed in an appendix.

The main difference between the English and American revisions are: The American version retains the name Jehovah instead of translating it as Lord or God. It is more uniform in the translation and use of other words. It has modernized some expressions passed over by the English revision, and in many cases prefers the readings of the King James' Version to those of the English revision. It is safe to say that the American revision is the latest and best result of Christian scholarship in translating the Bible into the English language.

Are there any who accept another rule of faith and life than the Scriptures?

Yes:

I. The Rationalists, who teach that human reason is the proper guide in matters of faith and life.

Not all, who practically are rationalists, are called by this name, but all who accept their own judgments rather than the plain teachings of Scripture are really rationalists.

The Reformed believer also ascribes great authority to reason, but not supreme authority. Reason may weigh the evidence adduced in favor of any religious truth, must ascertain the meaning and importance of any statement in revelation, and may, within certain limits, exercise what may be called a "veto power," forbidding the acceptance of teachings that are self-contradictory or are contradictory to ascertained truth. But reason alone is not reliable, it has been darkened by our fall in sin. That it is not reliable is evident from the hopeless position of those who arrogantly follow the decisions of reason: they are never agreed among themselves, the one spurning what the other holds dear, and all are ever seeking, but never rest confident in the positive conviction of knowing the truth.

II. The Roman Catholic, who adds to the Scriptures:

1. The apocryphal writings.
2. Tradition, certain alleged teachings of Christ and the Apostles, not recorded, but transmitted orally and endorsed by the rulers of the church.
3. Since 1870 official decisions of the Pope in all questions of faith and morals.

III. The Quakers add to the Word what they call *inner light*.

IV. Many advocates of so-called New Theology make much of what they term *christian consciousness* as rule of faith and life.

CHAPTER II

THE DOCTRINE OF GOD

GOD'S UNITY

Is there more than one God?

No, the Bible declares there is only one God, and that he is an absolute unit, incapable of division.

Deut. 6:4: "Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah."

Jas. 2:19: "Thou believest that God is one; thou doest well." Mark 10:19.

Beside these positive expressions of Scripture our own minds lead us to conclude there is but one God. There must be one designing intelligence and one moral governor, but nothing leads us to believe that there must be more than one.

Creation throughout its whole extent is one system presenting absolute unity of design, and hence produced by one designing intelligence.

Our own feeling of responsibility to one Supreme Being also witnesses to the unity of the source of all absolute authority.

How could there be two almighty beings?

The belief in more than one God is called Polytheism, which is characteristic of all heathen religions.

The belief in but one God is called Monotheism. Christians, Jews and Mohammedans are Monotheists.

Wherein must this one God be known?

In his *Essence, Names, Attributes, Persons and Works.*

We have before seen that God can be known from nature and from Scripture. He can be known, but not comprehended, for the finite can never comprehend the infinite, the creature the Creator.

That we can know God is due to his condescension in revealing himself.

GOD'S ESSENCE

What can we say as to God's Essence or Being?

That God is a personal spiritual Being of infinite perfection, existing in three Persons.

This is not intended as an adequate definition of God, which no one can give.

John 4:24: "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth."

GOD'S NAMES

Why are God's names significant?

Because they reveal something of God's perfection to us. God can only be known in so far as he has revealed himself to us. One manner of God's self-revelation is through his names, which declare something of God's attributes, his works and his relations to his creatures. These names are not merely words to distinguish God from others, as our names are, but they to a certain extent declare who God is. Because the fulness of his perfection is so great, and his relations to his creatures so varied, God has given us several names of himself. These names altogether, however, do not sufficiently express who God is. The Infinite can not be revealed by a finite term.

Which are some of the Hebrew names of God?

Elohim—He who is to be feared.

El—The Strong One, the Mighty.

Adonai—My Lord, my Master.

Eljon—The Exalted.

Tzebaoth or Sebaoth—The Lord of Hosts.

We give these Hebrew names, because they reveal so characteristically how God was known by his ancient people.

Which was God's highest name in Hebrew?

Jehovah or Jahveh.

This name refers particularly to God's self-existence, his unchangeableness and faithfulness. No exact equivalent for this name can be given in our language. The best explanation of its meaning is found in God's revelation to Moses, in the burning bush, Ex. 3:14: "I am that I am." When God sent Moses to lead Israel out of Egypt, Moses asked the Lord: Ex. 3:13: "Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them: The Lord of your fathers hath sent me unto you, and they shall say unto me, what is his name? What shall I say unto them?" Then said God unto Moses, vs. 14: "I am that I am: Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel: I am hath sent me unto you."

Notice that "I am" is present tense, not past or future. God did not become, nor will he become, but ever is, with him is an eternal present, he is ever the same, the unchangeable. With Jehovah there are no tenses. Because this name lays stress on the unchangeableness of God, it is used as God's covenant name, to designate that he is always true to his covenant promises, ever the same towards his people, the same towards the children as towards the fathers.

Ex. 3:15: "And God said moreover unto Moses, thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel: Jehovah, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the

God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name forever, and this is my memorial unto all generations."

This name is also given to Christ in Jer. 23:6: "Jehovah, our righteousness."

What name of God is prominent in the New Testament?

The name Father. Matt. 6:9: "Our Father, who art in heaven."

Through Christ God is a Father for his people.

GOD'S ATTRIBUTES

What do we understand by the attributes of God?

God's attributes are the perfections of his Being revealed to us. God is infinitely perfect; in most harmonious unity all perfections are in God, his Being is infinite perfection.

We can hardly say that there are different perfections in God, as though God were a composition of various parts, for in him is an absolute unity. But God's Being is made known to us as bearing various relations to his creatures, he manifests himself to us as unlimited in his presence, in power, in knowledge, etc. God can not reveal the fulness of his Being to us, but in various ways and at various times he manifests himself to us as we need to know him. Thus he manifests himself as the eternal, the unchangeable, the almighty Supreme Being. These manifestations or revelations we call God's perfections or his attributes. Just as a light may be broken in various colors, by letting it pass through a prism, so the unlimited perfection of God appears in its manifestations to us as the sum of various perfections.

It will be evident to all that we can know only such

attributes of God as he has condescended to reveal to us, and only so much of these as he has revealed.

Various classifications have been made of God's attributes. For the sake of an orderly presentation we will follow the old classification of *incommunicable* and *communicable* attributes.

The incommunicable includes those of which no likeness has been or could have been given to man, such as God's independency, eternity, omnipresence and unchangeableness.

The communicable includes those of which there is a likeness in man. Man was made in God's image, and after his likeness, so there is a likeness of something of God in man, as e. g., knowledge, power, will, etc. This likeness is not as distinct in fallen man as it was in the first man in Paradise, yet by the grace of God there is a likeness left in us.

INCOMMUNICABLE ATTRIBUTES

Which attributes of God must we class as incommunicable?

God's independency, simplicity, eternity, omnipresence, and immutability.

What does God's independency signify?

That God is self-existent and self-sufficient. God depends on no one else for his existence, but the whole universe depends on him.

Acts 17:25: "Neither is he served by man's hands, as though he needed anything, seeing he himself giveth to all life, and breath, and all things."

Because God is independent he is also sovereign, that is, to him belongs the right to govern and dispose of all his creatures according to his own good pleasure. By his power does God sustain all things in being, for

his own glory, and all things must wait on him, their absolute Lord and Master; their Sovereign.

Dan. 4:35: "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?"

Rom. 11:36: "For of him, and through him, and unto him, are all things. To him be the glory for ever. Amen."

What does God's simplicity signify?

God's simplicity means that in him is no composition of various parts, but that all in God is a unity. He is a Spirit of infinite perfection. In contrast to the simplicity of God we are complex, that is, composed of various parts, as soul and body, and our bodies are a complex of various elements.

I John 1:5: "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."

What does God's eternity signify?

God's eternity signifies that he is unlimited in the duration of his existence; he is without beginning, without continuance of time, and without end. God exists above time. We exist in time, we are temporal. The past and the future are as unchangeably present with God as the present.

Time is the duration of the creature. If the creature were self-existent, unchangeable and unending, it would also be eternal.

Upon his eternal throne God recognizes his creatures in their various places in time, and his actions upon his creatures proceed from him at the very moments predetermined in his unchanging plan and purpose.

Ps. 33:11: "The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations."

II Peter 3:8: But forget not this one thing, beloved, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." Ps. 90:2.

What does God's omnipresence signify?

God's omnipresence signifies that God is not limited to one place, but that he is present in every point of space. God is even beyond the limits of space.

Creation is billions of miles in extent, and there is not one inch of space in which God is not; there is not an atom of dust outside of his constant presence.

God does not, however, manifest his presence alike everywhere. His manifestation of himself is different in heaven than in hell; is different to the believer than to the unbeliever.

Jer. 23:24: "Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith Jehovah." Ps. 139.

What does God's immutability signify?

God's immutability signifies that he remains eternally the same, is unchangeable. In God is no increase or decrease, no variation of purpose.

How comforting is this fact for the believer, how dreadful for the ungodly!

James 1:17: "With whom can be no variation, neither shadow of that is cast by turning."

Mal. 3:6: "For I, Jehovah, change not, therefore ye, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed."

COMMUNICABLE ATTRIBUTES

Which attributes of God do we class as communicable?

God's intelligence, his power, and his will. And

under his will we bring God's holiness, truth, justice, and goodness.

What is included in God's intelligence?

God's knowledge or omniscience, and his wisdom.

What does God's knowledge signify?

God's knowledge is his apprehension of all truth. It is all-comprehensive, therefore termed omniscience. God perfectly knows the fulness of his own Being, as well as everything in his creation, and even all that is possible, that might be, if he wanted it to be.

If we were to compare our knowledge with God's we would note quite a difference. (a.) We know things only through our organs of sense, sight, hearing, etc., God knows all things immediately, for his own mind has conceived their very nature. (b.) We know things successively, one thing after another we learn of, God knows eternally and at once. (c.) Our knowledge is fragmentary and incomplete, and in a measure transient, God's is complete, independent, and permanent.

Does God know all future and contingent things?

Indeed, he does. Ps. 139:2: "Thou understandest my thought afar off."

Does God know future things because he has himself determined from eternity how they should be, or does he know them because he has foreseen what would happen?

He knows future things because he has determined what and how they shall be. God's eternal counsel has decided the minutest details of history, and all things will be as God has willed them to be.

They who believe that man has an arbitrarily free will, which can and does independently decide everything for himself, without any predetermination of God,

declare that God knows everything in the future because he has foreseen what his creatures would choose to do. God's knowledge of the future, according to this view, is not the result of his foreordination, but of his foreseeing, and it is not God's will but that of the creature himself that determines his life and actions. This view is, however, unscriptural and unreasonable.

Scripture teaches that God is Sovereign, he is not determined by his creatures, but he determines them. God is independent.

To say that God must behold the actions of men before he knows what they will do, and that he shapes his plans according to the changeable plans of men, is to believe that God is dependent on his creatures, and that in shaping his own life-course man is independent.

Man thus becomes his own sovereign, and even decides his own eternal state, while God must adapt himself to his sovereign creatures.

In this way the King of heaven and earth would be governed by his subjects. This is an unscriptural and unworthy idea of God.

Our view is that God has predestined the events of the future, according to his sovereign pleasure, and, therefore, he knows what is yet to come in every particular.

(See further discussion of this point under the head of God's will and predestination.)

Eph. 1:11: "In whom also we were made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will."

See Acts 17:24-26; Matt. 11:25, 26.

We also asserted that the presentation, as if God knew the future because he could foresee what we would

do, is unreasonable. Only that which is certain can be an object of knowledge, the uncertain, the probable, can not be an object of knowledge. If man's life is not pre-determined by God, it is entirely uncertain what man may do, for man changes as whims and notions impel him.

What does God's wisdom signify?

God's wisdom is that excellent practical use which God's intelligence makes of his knowledge, so that he reaches the highest aims by the best means. In creation and providence, as well as in the work of grace, God manifests his wisdom. Behold his wisdom in the changing seasons, the dripping rain, the beating of your heart, etc.

What does God's power signify?

God's power is that perfection of his Being whereby he is able to perform all he wills. God's power is almighty, therefore termed omnipotence.

Matt. 19:2: "With God all things are possible."

God could never do anything wrong; the absolute perfection of his Being would prohibit this; all that is true and good, God can perform if he will. What is impossible is contrary to God's nature, and so it would be contrary to God's own Being to do evil, or to make a square circle.

God's power is manifested, but never exhausted in his work; back of all God's work lies an infinite reserve of power. God but speaks and it is, he commands and it stands fast.

God works without or with means, as he chooses; he is not bound to means as we are.

How may God's will be distinguished?

1. As faculty or power of self-determination, this is God's power to choose.

2. As that which God has chosen, his choice, his determination, plan or purpose.

In ourselves we also speak of will in this twofold sense. At one time we speak of our will as faculty of our souls to choose; our will is then the power of our souls to desire or to decide something. At another time we speak of our will as that which we have willed, our choice, our plan or purpose.

In God as a personal spiritual Being, his will is above all the faculty of self-determination; and by this self-determining power of his own Being, God has chosen what he wishes to do with his creatures. The first is God's will as attribute of his Being. The second is God's will as his purpose concerning his creation.

How can we now describe God's will as attribute of his Being?

It is that holy perfection of God whereby he seeks himself above all, and the welfare of his creatures for his own glory's sake.

This description you will notice refers to God's will as faculty or power to choose. Even if God had never made a choice or plan to create anything, if there had never been any creature, God's will as power to choose for himself would still be that perfection in him whereby he seeks himself as the supreme excellence or highest good. God loves himself most because he is most excellent. He seeks his own glory most, because there can be no higher aim.

What is now God's will as determination or choice?

It is that determination or purpose of God concerning his creatures that decides and regulates what shall be, and how it shall be.

How can we again distinguish God's will in the latter sense?

Into the will of his decree or his secret will, and the will of his command or his revealed will.

What is the will of God's decree or his secret will?

His eternal purpose according to which he works all things in his own due time. God has an eternal purpose concerning everything in creation. According to this purpose he first created and since still upholds and rules the world.

This purpose of God is secret to us until it has been accomplished, therefore, we call this God's secret will, or the will of his decree.

What is the will of God's command or his revealed will?

It is that which God prescribes in his word as a rule of our life, and unto which he demands obedience. This revealed will is God's law for us, the rule that must regulate our lives.

We must be very zealous to know and to obey this revealed will of God. But we must not try to pry into God's secret will, this attempt would be contrary to the purpose of God, and cause ourselves unnecessary trouble and worry. It is well that we do not know what God's secret will is concerning ourselves. All attempts to know the future through fortune-tellers, mediums and clairvoyants is sinful.

Deut. 29:29: "The secret things belong unto Jehovah our God, but the things that are revealed belong unto us and our children forever, that we may do all the works of this law."

Sorcery and Clairvoyancy is forbidden in Lev. 19:26-28, 31; Isa. 8:19; Mal. 3:5.

Why do we in the list of communicable attributes include God's holiness, truth, justice, and goodness under his will?

In describing God's will as attribute of his Being, we said it was: that holy perfection whereby God seeks himself and the welfare of his creatures for his own glory's sake.

Now in our definitions of God's holiness, truth, justice, and goodness, you will notice that through each of these God seeks himself and the welfare of his creatures for his own sake. We can, therefore, rightly say that these attributes are the manifestation and the way of expressing his will.

What is God's holiness?

God's holiness is that perfection of his Being whereby he is separate from everything else, especially from sin, and that he is devoted to himself as the highest good.

God is the most Supreme, above him there can be no one else, therefore, God is not and can not be devoted to anyone higher than himself, and as sin is the most direct opposition to God, he is entirely separate from and opposed to sin. God as the Holy One, hates sin.

Our holiness is similar to God's. In so far as we are separate from and opposed to sin and devoted to God we are holy.

Can you see any connection between God's holiness and what we have said about God's will as attribute of his Being?

Isa. 6:3: "Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts."

What is God's truth?

Truth, as an attribute of God, is his self-consistency, and the agreement of all his representations with reality.

Within himself God is self-consistent, there is no

discord or disharmony in God, all his attributes constitute one harmonious unity.

Towards his creatures God is true in that what he represents is in perfect agreement with reality. A falsehood is a disagreement between representation and reality, as to say that fire will not burn, that ice is hot. This truthfulness of God is the ground of our hope, if we believe.

Ps. 89:34: "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that has gone out of my lips."

What is God's justice?

God's justice is the absolute righteousness of his Being.

This justice of God manifests itself to his creatures:

1. In giving righteous laws and their impartial execution: *Rectorial justice*.
2. In giving to each mortal creature his proper due of rewards and punishments: *Distributive justice*.
3. In demanding and inflicting the adequate punishment of all sin: *Punitive justice*.

An appreciation of the justice of God is very necessary. Many ignore the justice of God, especially his punitive justice. The theory of many is that God does not punish sin, he only chastises sinners for their correction and improvement, and when this is reached, he no longer inflicts suffering on the transgressors. According to this theory there will be no eternal suffering of the wicked in the next world. The theory makes much of God's love at the expense of his justice, it makes the expression of justice only a form of benevolence.

This theory is also applied to the administration of justice in many courts on earth, when it is presented that the purpose of punishing criminals is the protection of society and the reformation of the criminal.

Punitive justice, the infliction of punishment on the criminal to maintain the law, is derided, and a sentimental pity for the wrongdoer aroused to prevent the execution of law. But this theory is *wrong and pernicious*.

The improvement of the transgressor is truly an important element in the administration of justice, both human and divine, but it ought to be considered an important attendant effect rather than the main design of the execution of the law.

Scripture teaches that God is just, and in justice he will eternally punish the wicked who are lost. In this eternal punishment, God can not design the improvement of the devils and the wicked, but his design is the maintaining of his own sovereignty.

The deluge of the first world, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and Jerusalem, was not a chastisement for improvement, but rather a manifestation of the punitive justice of God.

Ps. 97:2: "Righteousness and justice are the habitation of his throne."

Nahum 1:6: "Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire."

The testimony of man's own conscience declares there is a difference between benevolence and justice. Benevolence prompts us to the promotion of happiness, justice prompts us to the instinctive judgment that the criminal must be punished. This difference in our sentiments is a reflection of the difference between God's love and justice.

The clearest manifestation of God's justice was seen in the sufferings of Christ, which was not first of all intended to make a favorable impression of God's love on

the sinner, but was to satisfy God's justice by bearing man's sin in his stead.

Rom. 4: 25. "Who was delivered for our offenses, and was raised for our justification." I Cor. 15: 3. Gal. 1: 3; 4: 4. I Thess. 5: 9, 10.

Can you see how God's justice can be classed under his will? Does not God through his justice also seek to maintain his own glory and honor?

What does God's goodness signify?

God's goodness signifies that glorious perfection which above all characterizes his Being as revealed to us, and which he exercises toward his creatures in various modes according to their condition and relation to himself. These various modes are: God's love, grace, mercy, patience.

1. God's love is his goodness manifested in bestowing many blessings on all his creatures, and was especially shown in giving to us his only begotten Son. John 3:16.

2. God's grace is his goodness manifested to the sinner in pardoning his guilt and granting him the fellowship of his own life and blessedness.

3. God's mercy is his goodness manifested to his creatures with respect to their miseries, feeling for them and making provision for their relief.

God's mercy includes his pity and compassion.

4. God's patience is his goodness manifested in sparing the impenitent and postponing punishment. Also termed long-suffering.

Ex. 34: 6. "And Jehovah passed by before him, and proclaimed, Jehovah, Jehovah, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness and truth."

A very proper distinction made in regard to the

manifestation of God's goodness is to speak of *common grace* and *particular or saving grace*. The former is enjoyed by all, and is shown in the providence of God that checks the working of Satan, sin and death, that grants to all the measure of enlightenment and civilization they have, and that preserves morality and virtue in the world. The latter is God's special grace, that saves from sin unto eternal life through the working of the Holy Spirit. (See more of this under Doctrine of regeneration.)

To what should the doctrine of God's attributes lead us?

To meditate on them reverently and believingly.

God is incomprehensible, but since he has revealed himself, we can meditate on his divine perfection, and if we do this reverently, our souls will worship in sacred awe.

Let us remember, the conception we have of God determines the character of our religion. The better our understanding of God, the better will be our practical religion.

Rev. 7: 12: "Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God forever and ever. Amen."

THE TRINITY

What is treated of in the doctrine of the Trinity?

The revelation of God concerning the three Persons of the Godhead: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The knowledge of the doctrine of the Trinity will greatly benefit us to understand who God is, for we will herein learn the peculiarity of each of the three Persons, and of their relation to each other and to us.

Is the doctrine of the Trinity gained from the Scriptures exclusively or also from nature?

From Scripture exclusively, it is not contrary to the revelation of God in nature, but it is *above* the revelation in nature.

Many attempts have been made to prove from nature that there are three Persons in God, but no attempt has ever succeeded.

Others have tried to illustrate their faith in the Trinity by various figures from nature, as e.g., water, vapor, and ice, three forms in which the same elements occur; but these figures are very inadequate, and really illustrate very little. There is nothing in nature wherein each form or each part of anything contains at the same time the whole of the object, as in God each Person possesses the whole divine Essence, and yet the divine Essence exists in three Persons. This is a mystery.

Is the fact that God exists in three Persons as clearly revealed in the Old as in the New Testament?

No, as God's revelation of himself proceeded, he has more fully made this fact known to his people, and we therefore find a much more complete revelation of the doctrine of the Trinity in the New than in the Old Testament. There are, however, many texts in the Old Testament wherein more than one Person, and some wherein even three distinct Persons are plainly revealed, especially when these texts are viewed in the light of the New Testament.

How is the doctrine of the Trinity evident in the Old Testament?

1. From texts wherein God speaks of himself in the plural number.

Gen. 1:26: "And God said: let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Gen. 3:22.

2. From texts wherein God and God, Lord and Lord are distinguished.

Ps. 45:67: "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a sceptre of equity is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness and hated wickedness; therefore, God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."

Here God, that is, the Father, is said to anoint God, that is, the Son.

3. From texts wherein the three Persons are expressly mentioned and distinguished.

Ps. 33:6: "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the Breath of his mouth."

Word—the Son. See John 1:1-5.

Breath of his mouth—the Holy Spirit.

See also Isa. 48:16; 61:1; Num. 6:24.

How is the doctrine of the Trinity proven from the New Testament?

1. From the institution of baptism, which is to be in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Matt. 28:19.

2. From the baptism of Christ. The Son was baptized, the Father spake from heaven, and the Spirit descended as a dove. Matt. 3:16, 17.

3. From the apostolic benediction. See II Cor. 13:14.

Without quoting further special proofs, we may say the whole teaching of the New Testament presupposes and is built on the doctrine that there is one God existing in three Persons, and the plan of salvation can not be understood unless this doctrine be recognized.

See Acts 2:33; John 14:16, 17; I Pet. 1:2.

How can we shortly formulate our faith in the Trinity?

In the following propositions:

1. There is but one God, and this one God is indivisible.

2. In this one God there are three Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

3. Between these three Persons there is a personal distinction; that is, each one is personally distinct from the other two Persons by some peculiar personal property. And between them, there is mutual love, and counsel, and coöperation.

4. The Being of God is not divided among the three Persons, as though each had a part of the Being of God, but each Person exists forever with the other two Persons in the Being of God, and yet each Person possesses the whole Being, and all the divine attributes are common to each of the three Persons. In God there is only one Being, one intelligence and one will, and still the three Persons exercise this one intelligence and will.

5. In the order of their existence and operation, there is distinction: (a.) Of existence, in so much that the Father is neither begotten by nor proceeds from the other Persons; while the Son is eternally begotten by the Father, and the Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father and the Son. (b.) Of operation, in so much that the first Person sends and operates through the Second, and the First and the Second operate through the Third.

What is meant by personal property?

That distinctive feature that characterizes each Person in his relation towards the other Persons.

That there are personal properties in each Person is evident from the names, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. These names do not express that one Person is older

or superior to the other, but they reveal the order of existence, and the relation of the three Persons toward one another.

What is the personal property of the Father?

Paternity: that he as Father exists of himself, he is not begotten by another, and he eternally generates the Son, and with the Son sends the Holy Spirit.

John 5:26: "For as the Father hath life in himself, even so gave he to the Son to have life in himself."

What is the personal property of the Son?

Filiation: that he eternally is begotten of the Father, and with the Father, sends the Holy Spirit.

The Father, by necessity of his nature, not by choice of will, eternally begets the second Person of the Trinity. Notice the Person not the Being is begotten.

Ps. 2:7: "I will tell of the decree: Jehovah said unto me, thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee."

John 1:18: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

What is the personal property of the Holy Spirit?

Procession: that he proceeds from the Father and the Son.

John 15:26: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall bear witness of me." Gal. 4: 6.

Notice the Spirit is sent by the Son and proceeds from the Father, thus the Father and the Son forever cause the proceeding of the third Person.

Is Jesus of Nazareth the only-begotten Son of God?

Yes, for the Scriptures plainly teach that to him belong divine names, attributes, works, and honor.

Names: John 1:1; Acts 20:28; Rom. 9:5; I John 5:20.

Attributes:

Immutability: Heb. 1:11, 12; 13:8.

Eternity: John 1:2; 8:58; 17:5; Rev. 1:7, 17, 18.

Omnipresence: John 3:13; Matt. 18:20; 28:20.

Omniscience: Matt. 11:27; John 2:23-25.

Omnipotence: John 5:17; Heb. 1:3; Rev. 1:8.

Works:

Creation: John 1:3, 10; Col. 1:16, 17.

Providence: Heb. 1:3; Matt. 28:18.

Judgment: II Cor. 5:10; Matt. 25:31, 32.

Miracles: John 5:21, 36.

Works of Grace: John 10:28; 16:7, 14.

Honor:

Baptized in his name: Matt. 28:19.

Blessed in his name: II Cor. 13:13.

Believed in: John 3:16; 14:1.

(For further proofs that Jesus is the Son of God, see chapter on the natures of Christ.)

Is the Holy Spirit God and a divine Person?

Yes, this is the plain teaching of Scripture.

In the fourth century certain parties taught that the Holy Spirit was a creature. Later in the sixteenth century, Socinus taught that the Holy Spirit was the divine energy or power when exercised in a certain way. This is yet the opinion of all modern Unitarians. But Scripture teaches that the Holy Spirit is God, that he is a divine Person, and not merely the impersonal energy of God.

As to the Son, also to the Spirit, are divine names, attributes, works, and honor ascribed, proving that he is a divine Person.

Names:

Acts 5:3, 4; Exod. 17:7; Heb. 3:7-11.

Attributes:

Omnipresence: I Cor. 12:13.

Omniscience: I Cor. 2:10, 11.

Omnipotence: Luke 1:35; Rom. 8:11.

Works:

Creation: Gen. 1:2; Ps. 104:30.

Miracles: Matt. 12:28; I Cor. 12:9-11.

Honor:

Baptized in his name: Matt. 28:19.

Blessed in his name: II Cor. 13:13.

That the Holy Spirit is not the divine power, but is himself a divine Person, is evident from the fact that Christ everywhere speaks of the Spirit as a Person.

John 14:16, 17: "He shall give you another Comforter, that he may be with you forever." The Holy Spirit is another than Jesus, therefore, a Person.

The name Comforter designates the Holy Spirit as a Person. It is, therefore, very sinful to speak of the Holy Spirit as *it*.

Is it necessary to lay emphasis on the doctrine of the divinity of Christ and of the Holy Spirit?

Yes, very necessary. Between us and the Unitarians who deny these doctrines, the distance is measureless. If Christ is a creature, and the Holy Spirit is not God, we who worship them are idolaters, while if Christ and the Holy Spirit are God, the Unitarians are committing a terrible sin in rejecting these doctrines.

Also upon our view of the meaning of Christ's death and of the plan of salvation, our idea of the divinity of Christ and of the Holy Spirit will have controlling influence. If Christ was only a man, his death could not atone for sin.

Fallen man needs a triune God, to draw, to redeem, to sanctify him.

Rom. 8:9: "But if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his."

John 6:44: "No man can come unto me, except the Father that sent me draw him; and I will raise him up in the last day."

Who deny that the Holy Spirit also proceeds from the Son?

The Greek Church, which teaches that the Spirit proceeds only from the Father.

Against this idea are the facts that:

1. The Spirit is called the Spirit of Christ and of the Son. Gal. 4:6; Phil. 1:19.
2. The Son also sends the Holy Spirit. John 14:16, 26.

Is there any distinction in the relation wherein each of the three Persons stands to the creatures?

Yes, each Person has a peculiar relation towards the creatures.

The Scriptures ascribe certain relation and certain work more prominently to the one Person than to the other. This does not mean to say that in all work of God in his creation the three Persons do not coöperate, as they certainly do, but that one Person is more prominent in certain work and relation toward us than the other.

What work is especially ascribed to the Father?

1. The devising of the plan of salvation, and the giving of the Son to carry out this plan.

John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son."

2. The work of creation and of providence.

I Cor. 8:6: "To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

3. The representing and maintaining of divine justice towards the sinner. The Son as our Savior is, therefore, said to satisfy the Father in the work of redemption, because the Father maintains the justice of God, which the sinner has violated, and which Jesus by his obedience in man's stead satisfies.

Matt. 26:39: "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away from me: nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

What work is especially ascribed to the Son?

1. Particularly the work of redemption, he became our surety in the eternal counsel of peace, and he carries out the work of salvation for his people.

John 17:4: "I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do."

Isaiah 53:10, 11, 42.

2. He is also prominent in creation, he is the Word by whom all things were made, John 1. The Father created through the Son.

What is the particular work of the Holy Spirit?

The completing of the work of the Father and the Son, both in nature and in grace.

1. In the work of creation, the Spirit was especially the Author of life, of form and beauty in the world. Therefore, it is said the Spirit of God moved (or was brooding) upon the face of the waters. Gen. 1:2.

In the beginning, and ever since, the Holy Spirit produces and preserves life in all its varieties, in plant and animal and man.

2. The endowing of man with natural talents and gifts for sciences and arts is also of the Holy Spirit.

3. The anointing and the equipping of men for special offices, as prophets, priests and kings, apostles, pastors and teachers.

4. The gathering together and the formation of the true church of Jesus Christ.

5. The applying to the members of the spiritual church of all the benefits that Christ has gained and bestows upon them, as regeneration, conversion, sanctification and glorification.

6. The Holy Spirit also prepared and fitted the human nature of Christ for redeeming sinners, so that it could fully coöperate with his divine nature. His human nature was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and he was led and filled by the Spirit in his whole ministry.

Why is the Spirit called the Holy Spirit?

Because he is the Author of all holiness in the world. He aims at beauty in the physical world, and at holiness in the moral world.

What heresies have been advocated in regard to the Trinity?

The principal ones were the following:

1. The *Sabellian theory*. Sabellus, a presbyter of Ptolemais, Egypt, in the middle of the third century, maintained that the names Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were only different forms of manifestation to us of one and the same divine Being, not different Persons in the Godhead, only various forms of manifestations.

2. The *Arian theory*. Arius, a presbyter of Alexandria, first part of fourth century. He maintained that the Godhead consists of only one eternal Person, who in the beginning, before the creation of the world, created in his own image, a super-angelic being, his only begotten Son, who is the head of God's creation and by whom also he made the world. The first and greatest

creature thus created by the Son was the Holy Spirit. In the fulness of time this Son became incarnated in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.

This theory makes both the first and second Person to be the only creatures.

3. The doctrine of the *Tritheists*, who held there were three Gods. Latter part of the sixth century.

4. The modern *Unitarian theory*. The Unitarians believe in one God, whom they call Father, but not in a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead. They believe that Jesus is *a* Son of God, not that he is *the* Son of God. They recognize him as a great teacher of spiritual truth, and the example of a noble life, but he is not considered equal with the Father. They do not worship Christ, but claim to follow him, and they have no need of a Mediator between God and man. They also hold that all men are alike God's children, they deny the fall of man, the depravity of human nature, and the sacrificial atonement of Christ.

Modern Unitarianism finds its beginning in the days of the Reformation, and was widely spread in Poland by two Italians, Laelius and Faustus Socinus, and in France by a Spaniard, Michael Servetus. From there it spread to England, whence it has been brought to this country.

At what Councils of the early church were the true doctrines concerning the Trinity formulated?

At the Councils of Nicea, A.D. 325, and at Constantinople, A.D. 381. Mainly through the influence of Athanasius the Council of Nicea condemned the Arian theory, and the following creed was formulated: "We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, the Maker of all things visible and invisible, and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, only begotten, begotten of the

Father, that is of the Essence of the Father, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten and not made, consubstantial with the Father, by whom all things were made, whether in heaven or earth, who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate and became man, suffered and rose again on the third day; ascended into heaven, and will come to judge the living and the dead. And we believe in the Holy Ghost."

Is the doctrine of the Trinity a mere doctrinal theory or is it of great practical value?

It is a doctrine of profound practical importance. The God of our salvation is the triune God, whom to know is life eternal. Every other conception of God presents a false view of God to the mind and conscience. The whole plan of salvation is founded on this doctrine. Justification, sanctification and every part of salvation is only understood in the light of the revelation that in God are three Persons. Trinitarians and Unitarians worship different Gods, and for us there can be no religious fellowship with those who deny the doctrine of the Trinity, unless we commit treason.

GOD'S WORKS

What is treated of under the heading of God's works?

1. God's eternal decrees.
2. God's work in creation and providence.

Why are God's decrees here treated?

Because they are the beginning of God's work.

Is. 46:9, 10: "I am God and there is none like me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying: My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

Eph. 1:11: "Having been foreordained according to

the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will." Ps. 139:16, 17.

What are God's decrees?

The eternal purpose of his will concerning everything that is to be and is to occur.

We use the word purpose in the singular to define the plural word decrees in order to bring out that God's decrees are all inseparably joined together so as to constitute a unit. They are as a web, every thread of which is connected with every other, and they all aim at one great end: the glory of God in his work.

What are the decrees of God called in Scripture?

God's will, pleasure, counsel, choice, purpose, election, foreordination.

Ps. 33:11; Jer. 23:18; Isa. 49:8; 53:10; Rom. 8:28; 9:11.

What is the nature of God's decrees?

They are eternal, free, all-comprehensive, efficacious, and unchangeable.

In what sense are God's decrees free?

They are free in the sense that in decreeing God was actuated solely by his own good pleasure. God was not constrained by anything outside of himself, but he acted consistently with the perfection of his own nature.

What do we mean that God's decrees are all-comprehensive?

That they include everything, even the minutest details of everything that exists and that occurs.

Matt. 6:26: "Behold the birds of the heavens, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them."

If God has determined everything, does not that take away the free agency of man?

This question is ever asked when the fact that God

has determined everything is confessed. Many declare that God's universal and all-comprehensive decree and man's free will are incompatible, and that if God has decreed everything, he must be the Author of sin.

The old Pelagians and later Arminians, in their effort to maintain the free will of man denied the all-comprehensiveness of God's decrees.

The Pelagians simply ignored all faith in God's decrees. The Arminians spoke of a conditional decree, by which they meant that God had decreed that an event should happen upon the condition that some other event, possible, but uncertain, (because not determined) should actually occur. Thus God has decided to save those who believe, they declare, but whether a person would believe or not, is not determined by God. That was left to man's free will. God decreed to save on condition that man repent and believe, therefore, the decree to save anyone is called a conditional decree.

This is today the teaching of Arminian Methodism, and of a great many other branches of Protestantism.

All who profess to believe in God's foreknowing or foreseeing, but not in his foreordination, and who teach that man has yet a free will for good or evil, must come to deny the all-comprehensiveness of God's decree.

How can we meet those who do not believe that God has determined everything that shall occur?

First we will prove that God's decrees are absolutely all-comprehensive.

Secondly, we will answer the objections raised against this doctrine.

I. Scripture teaches:

a. That the whole system of the world is embraced in the divine decree.

Acts 17:26: "He made of one every nation of men

to dwell on the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation." Eph. 1:11.

- b. That the good and evil deeds are both included in God's decrees.

Acts 2:22, 23: "Jesus Christ . . . being delivered up by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye by the hand of lawless men did crucify and slay." Acts 4:27, 28.

- c. That God has determined the end as well as the means, and the means as well as the end. Ends and means are inseparable.

Gen. 50:20: "And as for you, ye meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive."

- d. That no event is isolated. If one event is determined all connected events must also be determined with it.

Matt. 10:29, 30: "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father: but the very hairs of your head are all numbered."

This teaching of Scripture is most reasonable:

As a Being of infinite wisdom, God in originating the world must also have pre-determined the outcome of what he originated. To start such a stupendous system without deciding the issue of it all would mean recklessness and not wisdom.

II. Our answer to objections:

- a. First objection raised is that if God has decreed all that is to occur, man is no longer free, he can not decide his own course, and is therefore not responsible.

To this objection we reply that God's decree has in-

deed made certain what will occur, there is no luck or chance or accident for God, but absolute certainty, because God has predestined all things.

But that things are certain does not mean that God robs man of his liberty. Certainty and liberty are not incompatible.

If God took away man's liberty to choose for himself it would mean that he constrained and forced man to do something against his own will and nature, but this God does not do. God so influences the nature and will of man that he freely carries out the eternal plan of God.

There is a hidden and mysterious influence of God directing our inner lives, which is in full harmony with our own nature, and is in no way a forcing of ourselves against our wills. We are free, we are not forced, and we are not mere machines, and yet while we freely act, God carries out through us his all-comprehensive plan.

We must acknowledge there is a mystery here we cannot fully understand, but it is revealed as a fact, and, therefore, we believe, though we cannot fully comprehend and explain.

In regard to the salvation of man we can not believe in a conditional decree, as though God waited for man to accept or reject salvation, and then suited his actions to man's decree.

God is sovereign, and in the administration of his government, God is not determined by the uncontrolled actions of his creatures, but rather is God free in the execution of his plans, he acts in every detail according to his good pleasure and the counsel of his will.

They who believe in a conditional decree always teach that it is by faith that man accepts the first beginning of salvation, and that faith is the free act of man's will, but Scripture teaches that faith is a gift of God,

and that as many as God hath foreordained he hath also called. God's work ever precedes man's work.

Acts 13:48: "And as many as were ordained to, eternal life believed."

Second objection raised is that if God's decrees are all-comprehensive, God is then the Author of sin.

This we indignantly deny. God is never the cause of sin, he is holy, forbids and punishes sin. (Job 34:10.)

God has allowed sin to enter the world and still allows it to continue, but he does not cause it. The reason why God allows sin is a mystery, and it is a mystery to all, no matter what idea we have of God's decrees. Even they who deny every reference to any plan of God cannot understand why God should allow sin to continue in the world. All that any one can say is that God allows it to his own glory.

What do we mean that God's decrees are efficacious?

That they can never be resisted, and are always infallibly executed.

Dan. 4:35: "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him what doest thou." Matt. 16:21. Luke 18:31-33. Acts 2:23.

What should be the effect of believing that God has foreordained all events?

1. Humility of heart, in view of the fact that God is Sovereign and we dependent creatures.

2. Recognition of God's will in everything, making us thankful in prosperity, patient in adversity, and trustful for the future.

3. Encourage us in the use of all available and intelligent means to reach desired ends. If there were not an established connection between means and ends,

we could not have any certainty; we might do a certain thing, expecting a certain result, but instead of reaching this result we would be bitterly disappointed by reaching another result. Now if we obey the revealed will or law of God, we feel certain we shall prosper, for God has determined the end, the result of our means.

4. Hope and confidence as touching the triumph of truth and right, seeing that God, and not chance nor fate, nor Satan, nor any mere creature rules the destinies of all things.

What do we call that decree of God that has determined the eternal destiny of his rational creatures?

Predestination: Including two parts: gracious election of some to eternal life, and most righteous reprobation of the rest.

PREDESTINATION

What do we understand by predestination?

It is the eternal counsel of God, whereby he has determined the eternal destiny of all mankind and includes two parts: the sovereign election of some to eternal life through Jesus Christ, and the most righteous reprobation of the rest for their sins. Predestination, therefore, is a general term that includes two parts: *election* and *reprobation*.

The doctrine of predestination has been fiercely assailed from the days of the Apostle Paul to the present, and has been the cause of bitter controversies in the Christian Church. There are especially two opposite opinions on this subject, held by the Arminians and the Calvinists.

We will first state the two views, and then explain the biblical ground of the doctrine of predestination.

The Arminian View

The Arminians, so-called from their leading representative, Jacob Arminius, a Dutch professor († 1609), teach that God has eternally predestinated certain persons to eternal life, whom he foresaw would repent, and believe and persevere to life and salvation.

The ground of election is, therefore, a foreseen repentance and faith. This view of election accompanies the theory of a universal atonement—that is, that Christ has offered a sufficient sacrifice for all mankind, but it becomes efficient only for such as have faith and believe in him.

According to this view, the reasons why some are saved and others not, is that some, by the act of their free will, believe, and others do not. Man himself, and not the sovereign pleasure of God determines his eternal future.

The Calvinistic View

The Calvinists, so-called from their leading representative, John Calvin, the French Reformer († 1564), teach that God has, according to the sovereign good pleasure of his will elected some of humanity to eternal life and has most righteously reprobated the rest to eternal condemnation.

The ground of election is according to this view not the foreseen faith of the persons elected, but the sovereign good pleasure of God.

In reply to the question why some are saved and others are not, the Calvinist answers, because God has, to the honor and glory of his name, chosen some to eternal life and also ordained the means of their salvation, while he has left others in the misery which sin has brought upon them.

What are the two elements involved in the doctrine of reprobation?

First, the negative element, that God has passed over those not chosen, in refusing to elect them to eternal life; second, the positive element, that they are by God condemned to eternal misery.

In respect to its negative element, reprobation is simply sovereign, since those passed over were no worse than those elected, and the simple reason, both for the passing over and the choosing, was the sovereign good pleasure of God.

In respect to its positive element, reprobation is judicial, because God inflicts misery only as the righteous punishment of sin.

Is there besides the regular Arminian and Calvinistic view, yet another theory of predestination?

Yes, that termed by its advocates the "Theory of National Election." This is the theory that the only election spoken of in the Bible consists of the divine predestination of communities and nations to the knowledge of religion and the external privileges of the gospel. God, they say, has shed gospel light on some parts of the world and left the remainder in darkness. He has elected some to the enjoyment of Christian privileges while others are in a state of heathenism. This election does not secure salvation, though it confers great advantages on those who are the subjects of it. This view is really Arminian, since it makes salvation depend on man's fulfilling the condition of being a faithful follower of Christ.

What are the grounds for the Calvinistic view of Predestination?

1. The plain teachings of Scripture directly affirm the doctrine of Predestination.

Eph. 1: 4, 5: "Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish before him in love; having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."

II Tim. 1: 9: "Who saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before times eternal."

Rom. 8: 28-30: "And we know that to them that love God all things work together for good, even to them that are called according to his purpose, for whom he foreknew, he also foreordained to be conformed to the image of his Son . . . and whom he foreordained, them he also called"

Rom. 9: 11-13: "For the children being not yet born, neither having done anything good or bad, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said unto her, the elder should serve the younger. Even as it is written, Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."

Vs. 15: "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." Vs. 16: "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that hath mercy."

See I Pet. 1: 1; I Thess. 1: 3, 4.

2. The doctrine of predestination follows from the fact that God's decrees are all-comprehensive. (See former Chapter.) God notices the fall of a sparrow. He numbers the hairs of our head. Every good and perfect gift comes from him. He controls all the acts of men, giving faith, and working in us to will and to do according to his good pleasure. If he regulates our

temporal life, does he not determine our eternal destiny? What is this life but a preparation for the eternal?

3. Predestination follows from the doctrine of God's sovereignty. To the question who decides our lot, we or God? we answer, God. He is Sovereign, and all things exist through him and unto him. God does not depend on our willingness to come unto him, for then he were not Sovereign.

4. Predestination follows from the scriptural doctrine of the impotence of man in trespasses and sins, and from the need of regeneration. Man is dead in trespasses and sins, he cannot and will not come unto God, and choose to live a holy life. Therefore, the need of regeneration, whereby he is made alive unto God and good works. But in regeneration man is entirely passive, God gives him a new heart. God begins the work of salvation in one who is an enemy of true holiness. God is always first in the work of grace, according to his eternal purpose. We love him, because he first loved us.

5. Predestination follows from the scriptural doctrine of particular atonement. Christ has died for his people, and these constitute the members of his spiritual body. The spiritual body of Christ is formed according to God's fixed plan. But if it were dependent on man's choice to form the body of Christ it were altogether uncertain whether it would ever be completed and how it would be formed, it were then merely accidental. Scripture teaches Christ died for his people, that he prays for those the Father gave him, and that the saints are elect in him.

(For discussion of particular atonement, see Priestly Office of Christ.)

6. Predestination follows from the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. God brings eternal life to

man and preserves it in him. It is not left to man to accept and to continue in grace, nor is it true that God brings salvation to man and that man must then preserve it himself. The saints are regenerated and after that continued in Christian life by God, and God operates according to his eternal purpose.

(For discussion of perseverance of saints, see Sanctification.)

What objections are made against the doctrine of Predestination?

1. That it represents God as dealing unjustly.

But this is not the case. It would have been just for God to have left the world to perish in sin. If this be so, who shall challenge God's right to have mercy on as many as he pleases?

This same objection was made in Paul's day. Rom. 9: 14. Paul answers, not by trying to defend God's actions, but by asserting that God claims the right to have mercy on whom he will have mercy, vs. 15, and by illustrating how God exercises the right to have mercy and to harden whom he will, vs. 17.

Man who has forfeited and lost all his rights can never claim that God deals unjustly. If man had just claims, it were otherwise.

2. That it takes away human liberty and responsibility.

This objection was also urged in Paul's day. Rom. 9: 19. Paul answers this objection without trying to satisfy human reason, he simply: 1. Asserts God's sovereignty as Creator and man's dependence as creature; 2. Asserts the just exposure of all men alike to wrath as sinners. Rom. 9: 20-24: "Nay, but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?"

Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to show his wrath and to make his power known endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory?"

3. That makes the use of means unnecessary.

Popularly stated: "If I am to be saved, I shall be saved no matter what I am; if I am to be lost, I shall be lost, do what I may."

This objection arises from the mistake of not seeing that God's decree embraces every event, that he fore-ordained the means as well as the end. If God decrees to save a soul, he decrees that he shall hear, heed and believe the gospel. In like manner, if God decrees that there shall be an abundant harvest, he decrees that the farmer shall prepare the soil, sow the seed, and that favorable influences shall combine to produce the result.

God has determined the age we will reach, but none would be foolish enough to say: "I am to reach a certain age, do what I may, and therefore, I will no more eat and in every way neglect my health." In spiritual affairs as well as in natural affairs, it is our business to use the means in expectation of God's blessing upon our efforts to reach the desired end.

Is the doctrine of the particular election of some consistent with the general offer of the gospel to all?

Yes, indeed it is. The gospel offers salvation to all, and promises that whosoever will come shall not be cast out.

Election puts no barrier in their way; any one will be saved if he accepts the gift of God in Jesus Christ.

God is sincere in offering salvation to all, but he leaves the non-elect to follow the sinful tendency of their hearts, while he makes the elect willing to believe and obey.

Furthermore there is no way of knowing who are elect and who are not, therefore, the gospel and the ministers of the gospel must appeal to all alike.

(For further discussion on this point, see doctrine of External Calling.)

What objection have we against the Arminian view of election?

1. It is unscriptural. They teach that God has chosen some because of a foreseen faith which they would exercise in accepting salvation. But faith itself is a gift of God. Scripture teaches faith is the result of election, not its cause. God elects us that we may believe, not because we believe. II Tim. 1: 9.

2. All the arguments we have brought forth in favor of the Calvinistic view are squarely against the Arminian view.

3. It does not avoid difficulties which Arminians see in the Calvinistic system. They call our view hard, cruel and devilish, but their view is no less hard. It is just as hard to believe that God foreknew some would reject salvation and go on in sin, when God might have prevented it, as to believe that God has chosen some to eternal life and others not.

The Reformed view is not hard in the sense of cruel, but the facts of heaven and hell, eternal weal and woe, are hard facts, immense realities, an awful contrast. Why they are as they are, we seek not to explain, but we rest in the will of God, the Holy Sovereign.

4. All evangelical Christians of every theological

view are practically Calvinists when they come to commune with God. All the prayers and hymns of Christians breathe the spirit of Calvinism. They all pray that God may make men repent and believe. If the reason one believed and the other did not was in man's free will, we ought to pray men to make themselves different. But all pray that God may change men and give him the honor when it is done.

Do the Scriptures speak of any election of others beside man?

Yes, of the election of Christ and of the angels.

In what sense is Christ elected?

I Pet. 1: 20, declares that Christ was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world. This foreknown refers to Christ as Mediator, not as Son of God. As Mediator he was specially loved from all eternity. The Son was chosen by the Father to become our Savior, and as Savior he was foreknown and loved. (See I Pet. 2:4.)

The means Christ needs for the realization of the Kingdom of God have also been predestined to him. Luke 22: 29: "And I appoint unto you a Kingdom, even as my Father appointed unto me."

The saints are elected in him. This means that together with their election Christ was chosen to be their head.

Eph. 1: 14: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world."

What do the Scriptures say of the election of angels?

I Tim. 5: 21: "I charge thee in the sight of God, and Christ Jesus, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things."

From this text it appears that there has been an election among the angels and that the reason why some

angels fell and others did not was in the sovereign will of God.

What is the practical bearing of the doctrine of Predestination?

1. It exalts the majesty and absolute sovereignty of God, while it illustrates the riches of his free grace and his just displeasure with sin.

2. It enforces upon us the essential truth that salvation is entirely of grace. That no one can complain if passed over, or boast, if saved.

3. It brings the seeking soul to self-despair, and to the cordial embrace of the free offer of Christ.

4. For the believer this doctrine deepens his humility, and elevates his confidence and hope. By grace we are what we are. Without the assurance that the unchangeable counsel of God has determined to save us we would ever be worrying till the end, for our own nature is weak and changeable. We would not hold on to the Savior, if he did not ever hold us.

John 18: 9: "Of those whom thou hast given me I lost not one."

"Why was I made to hear thy voice
And enter while there's room,
While thousands made a wretched choice,
And rather starve than come?
'Twas the same love that spread the feast
That sweetly forced me in,
Else I had still refused to taste,
And perished in my sin."

Is there often much wrong use made of this doctrine?

Yes, very much. Many seek to find in this doctrine an excuse for their careless and godless manner of living, saying if they are elect they will be saved anyway;

while others worry over the possibility that they are not elect, till they sometimes drive themselves to despair.

These are both very wrong. The doctrine of election as revealed in Scripture is never intended as a revelation for the unconverted, it is intended for God's people, for their instruction and edification. It is God's private message to the saints, let others leave it alone, lest they misconstrue its meaning to their own injury.

Who are and who are not elect is part of God's secret will, and "the secret things are for God, but the revealed things are for us and our children, that we may do all the words of this law." Deut. 29: 29.

For the unconverted God's revealed will is that he should forsake his sin and turn to Christ in faith, and use every means of grace to this end, God promising him eternal life, if he will turn.

No one has reason to believe he is not elected, the greatest of sinners can be saved. Especially may a child of the covenant look for God's mercy, for to him the promises of God have been made and sealed in a particular manner. Fix your attention particularly on the covenant privileges and duties. (See Covenant of Grace.)*

Can we know whether we are included in the number of the elect?

Yes, for whom God predestinates them he also calls,

* In the Conclusion appended to the Canons of Dordrecht, Synod exhorts all their brethren in the Gospel of Christ to conduct themselves piously and religiously in handling this doctrine, both in the universities and churches, to direct it as well in discourse as in writing, to the glory of the Divine Name, through holiness of life and the consolation of afflicted souls, to regulate by the Scripture, according to the analogy of faith, not only their sentiments, but also their language, and to abstain from all those phrases which exceed the limit necessary to be observed in ascertaining the genuine sense of the Holy Scriptures.

H. B.

and whom he calls he justifies, and whom he justifies he also sanctifies. If we find the marks of faith, hope and love in our lives we have evidence of God's calling, and effectual calling proves election. Rom. 8: 29. See Rom. 8: 16, 17; Eph. 4: 30; II Peter 1: 5-10; II Tim. 1: 12.

In the discussion of predestination what is meant by Infra-lapsarianism and Supra-lapsarianism?

These refer to two different views held by Reformed theologians as to the true relation of the several parts of God's decree concerning man. We believe God's decree is one single, eternal intention. There was no order of succession in the purpose of God, as if God first decided to do one thing and then another. That is the way we do, because of our limitation. But God's decrees are one choice, one whole, a unit. Yet in willing the entire system, God of course comprehended all the parts of the system in their logical relation and succession to one another.

In like manner as a man by one act of mind recognizes a complicated machine with which he is familiar, and in the same act discriminates the various parts, and comprehends their unity and relation in the system, and the design of the whole. So the question is: in what relation did the various parts of God's decree concerning man stand toward each other? That is, what is the relation in the divine mind between Creation, Predestination and Redemption?

Concerning the order in which these parts stand toward one another there are two views among Calvinists, called Infra- and Supra-lapsarianism.

1. Infra-lapsarianism views the order of the various parts as follows: 1. The decree to create man; 2. To permit man to fall; 3. The decree to elect certain men out of the mass of fallen and justly condemned men, to

eternal life, and to pass others by, leaving them to the just consequences of their sins; 4. The decree to provide salvation for the elect.

2. Supra-lapsarianism views the order of the several parts as follows: 1. Of all possible men, God first decreed the salvation of some and the damnation of others, for the end of his own glory; 2. He decreed, as a means to that end, to create those already elected or reprobated; 3. He decreed to permit the whole race to fall; 4. He decreed to provide salvation for the elect.

The Supra-lapsarians believe predestination is above the fall of man.

Supra—above; Lapsus—the fall.

The Infra-lapsarians believe predestination is below the fall.

Infra—below; Lapsus—fall.

Both views agree that the reason some are chosen and others not is the sovereign will of God and not in man and both agree the non-elect are lost because of their sins.

(See Art. 16 of our Confession of Faith.)

Note.—In this connection we quote the decision of the Synod of Utrecht, 1905, that expresses the position of the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands: "In regard to the first point Infra- or Supra-lapsarianism, the Synod declares that our Standards of Doctrine certainly follow the infra-lapsarian representation of the doctrine of election, but that, as appears from the words of Chapter I, Art. 7, of the Canons of Dordt as well as from the discussions of the Synod of Dordt, it is not intended to exclude or condemn the supra-lapsarian representation; that it is therefore not allowed to present the supra-lapsarian view as the teaching of the Reformed Church of the Netherlands, but it is also not allowed to trouble any one who for himself maintains the supra-lapsarian idea, since the Synod of Dordt has not expressed itself on this point of controversy; to which the Synod adds the admonition that these deep doctrines, which greatly surpass the comprehension of the unlearned, be as little as possible brought up in the pulpits and that in the preaching of the Word and in the catechetical instruction the presentation of our Standards of Doctrine be followed."

CREATION

When did the first carrying out of God's decrees begin?

In the beginning of time, when God created heaven and earth. Out of nothing did God call the material of earth and heaven into existence. There was nothing, no material or no force for God to use, he spake and by his Word and Spirit he produced all that is.

Gen. 1: 3: "And God said, let there be light and there was light."

Ps. 33: 9: "For he spake and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast."

Rom. 4: 17: "Who calleth the things that are not as though they were."

What does it mean to create?

To bring into existence by the act of an almighty will. God wills a thing to be and it is, thus he creates. First he willed that the substance of the world should be, and it was; then he willed that the bodies of animals and of man should be formed out of the dust of the ground and they were formed, he willed that the earth should bring forth trees and plants, and it did. The producing of the material of the world was out of nothing, and then out of this existing material God further created the various creatures, as plants, animals and man. But whether he used an existing substance or brought forth out of nothing in both cases God's will spake and it was.

Does our faith in the doctrine of creation rest on revelation or on scientific investigation?

It rests on revelation. On this point as on every other we believe because God has revealed the truth. A sane view of the world, of its material and composition, will confirm our faith that God has created all things,

but our faith does not rest on our reasoning, its ground is God's Word.

Heb. 11: 3: "By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear."

Did God make the world and the fulness thereof at once?

No; God created it in systematic order in six days. The order of creation is given as follows:

In the beginning, the heavens and earth. This was the beginning of time, therefore, on the first day. On this same day he also created the light.

The work of the first day is called immediate, and that of the succeeding days mediate, creation.

The second day, the firmament or expanse dividing the waters above from those below.

The third day, separation of the waters and the dry land, and causing the dry land to bring forth grass, herbs and fruit-trees.

The fourth day, sun, moon and stars. The fifth day, fishes and birds. The sixth day, animals and man.

Notice the order, how one thing is wisely made to prepare for another.

What does it mean that God rested on the seventh day?

That he ceased to create and delighted himself in his handiwork.

What was the condition of the earth when God first created it?

The earth was waste and void, it was a chaos. The waters in the clouds and in the oceans and the dry land were a confused mass.

Is creation the work of the Father only?

No, it is the work of the triune God, although the

Father is most prominent. From John I we learn: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made through him; and without him was not anything made that was made." Vs. 14: "and the Word became flesh." Here is a reference to Christ, of whom it is expressly said that all things are through him. The Father speaks and creates through the Son. See Col. 1: 12-17.

Of the Holy Spirit in creation it is said, Gen. 1: 2: "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." The Spirit moved over the waters as a bird hovers or broods over its young to warm and develop their vital powers. The Spirit is the Originator of all life, and as such he worked upon the formless, lifeless mass, separating, quickening, and preparing the living forms, which were called into being by the creative words of the following days. The Holy Spirit filled creation with vital energy.

What was the purpose of God in creating the world?

Rom. 11: 36: "For of him, and through him, and unto him, are all things."

Prov. 16: 4: "Jehovah hath made everything for his own purpose; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."

The purpose of creation is the glory of God. God's glory in the world is the manifestation of the excellence of his attributes.

Not to increase his excellence or blessedness did God create the world, but to manifest his glory outside of his own being. The chief end for which we and all things exist is, therefore, not first of all our happiness, but God's honor. Our happiness and welfare are gained, however, when God's purpose is reached. God's glory and man's welfare are inseparable.

Which are the principal unbiblical theories as to the origin of the world?

The theory of the *Materialists*. They believe that matter is not created, but self-existent from eternity. Some of these hold that matter is void of intellect, others that intellect is in matter.

The theory of the *Pantheists*. They identify God and the world. God is the only absolute being out of whom flow the changing things of the world. The material things are the passing modes of God's existence.

The theory of the *Evolutionists*. The most prevalent theory today. The fathers of this theory are especially Alfred R. Wallace and Charles Darwin. The evolutionists differ among themselves, some going to much greater extremes than others, some are decidedly atheistic, ignoring or denying the hand of God in creation altogether, while others are professedly theistic. Many of the latter seek to reconcile the theory of evolution with the biblical account of creation.

THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION

The most prevalent view of the origin of the world among evolutionists in scientific circles is this: Originally there was a nebulous or gaseous substance, superheated and formless; through gravitation and other natural forces this mass of substance assumed globular form and in the course of endless revolutions became cooled and condensed in fluid and solid matter. When thus condensed it again took ages of development to give the world the present composition. This development has gone on especially through chemical changes.

As soon as our planet was sufficiently cooled, life came into it through the action of physico—chemical laws, through what is called a spontaneous generation,

or according to others, by supernatural creation. The first germ of life is called a protoplasm, from which all life in plant and animal and man has come by gradual development. The different forms and characters which living things have taken have been determined and conditioned by the changes in the internal structure of the globe and the various environments in which life came, differences in climate and food and associations causing changes in the species of living things.

In the course of evolution the thousands of species of plants and animals which we have today have all had their origin in the same germs of life, the original protoplasms. The "origin of species" is through the transmutation of one species into another by the laws of natural development. Nature is ever seeking to improve, to bring forth the best. There is in the male and female of every living thing a desire to unite with the best of the opposite sex that the offspring may be better than the parents. By this natural and sexual selection each succeeding generation is an improvement on the former. There is also among all individuals and among the various species of plants and animals a constant "struggle for existence," and in this struggle there is a "survival of the fittest," the stronger crowding out or destroying the weaker. Thus through outward environment and the laws of selection and the survival of the fittest there is a constant evolution.

The highest in the scale of developed living beings is man, who is the descendant of some monkey sort. Man has developed from the animal through various stages of savagery and barbarism to civilized and enlightened nations. He is yet ever developing and learning to control the forces of nature. The outcome of all evolution is optimistic hope, giving assurance that

man's future will brighten, and that as the ages roll on life will yet more develop, and it will be worth living far more than now.

What must be our judgment of this evolutionary theory?

We must declare that though we marvel at the ingenuity of the constructors of this theory, we cannot accept, but decidedly reject it, because we believe it is both unscientific and unbiblical.

It is unscientific, because it rests on suppositions, hypotheses, and not on solid facts. The evidences brought forth are altogether insufficient to prove the assertions of the evolutionists.

The evolution theory undertakes to give us the explanation of the origin of everything and its later development, but it dismally fails.

1. Evolution does not explain the origin of one atom and the laws and properties with which it is invested. It can only suppose that matter originated in a certain way, but has no objective proof for its supposition.

2. Evolution cannot explain the origin of life. The gulf between death and life it cannot bridge. The result of the most searching investigation of all scientists is that only life can produce life. The theory of spontaneous generation can find support only in the imagination of an evolutionary fanatic, but has never been proven. That the inorganic and lifeless matter should produce the organic and living is impossible. Every scientist of any reputation recognizes the supernatural as necessary for the production of life, and where God is necessary to produce life, faith in a purely naturalistic evolution is an impossibility.

3. Evolution cannot prove that vegetable life ever changes into animal life. These two forms of life are

the converse of each other: the one deoxidizes and accumulates, the other oxidizes and expends.

4. Evolution cannot prove the transmutation of species by natural processes. It is one of its fundamental teachings that one species of plant or animal may be transformed into another, and that through long continued transmutation the higher types of animal life, including man, have been evolved from the lower.

If this theory of the transmutation of species is not established, the whole system of evolution breaks down. But this theory again rests on suppositions. There is no evidence that the lines of demarcation between distinctive orders of beings have ever been overstepped. There is no gradual shading of one into another, there are no links between, the separation is abrupt and clear.

No indisputable proof has ever been offered that the animals of today are the offspring of different animals than those now living or extinct. If transmutation of species was a fixed law of the universe we might expect to find a number of animals in various stages of re-formation and transmutation. But the fact is we do not find them.

Great efforts have been made to prove the origin of man from some ape family, but thus far to no avail. A few years ago evolutionists were sure they had found the missing link between man and the ape, in the bones found by a Dutch physician, Dubois, in the island of Java, in 1891. These bones were two teeth, the roof of a skull, and a thigh bone. Of these bones it may now be said on the best authority that hardly any scientist in Europe ascribes any importance to them. The distinction between man and animals is clear cut, no connecting link has been found, and thus it is with every distinct order of being. Man is not the likeness and image

of a baboon, and, too, among the twenty thousand species of animals already classified not one instance is known where different species have been crossed that the result has not been sterility in the animal thus begotten, e. g., the mule; and if this always has been the case, and no reason can be given for thinking otherwise, then there is shut out completely what seems to be the most available agency at nature's command for the production of new species.

A fixed law of biology, confirmed by the testimony of geology, is that the species shall forever be kept inviolate and distinct. There may be the widest variations between individuals of a species, there is no transmutation of one species to another. The results of scientific investigation are in harmony with the simple statement of Gen. 1, that God made everything after its kind originally.

5. Evolution cannot prove a universal law of development and improvement. If evolution is true there must be an improvement in the species, among animals and plants, as the ages go on. But the fact is that the earliest traces of plants and trees and animals found in the various deposits of the earth are identical with those now existing of the same kind, and if we come to historical times we find the mummies of cats, dogs, birds, crocodiles, bulls and of man in the tombs of Egypt to be identical with their living representatives. There are even some things which show a pronounced deterioration of parts and functions. And if history warrants any statement, it is that but for the uplifting and inspiring power of true religion, of Old and New Testament, mankind long since would have wrecked itself and have disappeared from the face of the earth. To say that nature shows a progression is but half a truth, for nature

equally shows a declining and ending. Retrogression is as evident as evolution.

6. Evolution can give no account of the origin of the intellectual and moral nature of man, which it ought to explain if we are to believe that man descended from an animal. Man's self-conscious, rational nature, his language and religion have never been understood from the evolutionary standpoint.

7. Evolution can not prove that man has emerged from a brute condition. It teaches that man began on the level with the brute and has been working his way up through countless ages to civilized life, but it can not prove this. Archaeology proves that the earliest people of whom we know anything had a comparatively high state of civilization, they built cities, had systems of writing and astronomy, founded schools, engaged in business and in political and international relations. Of other people older than those in Egypt and in the Euphrates' and Tigris' valleys, the scientist knows nothing. For all we know the most primitive people had bodies and brains just as capable of working, and language just as complete in expressing thought, as any people now living. If one compares the marble palaces and high attainments of primitive people with the mud hovels and degradation of their descendants he would rather think of decay than evolution. And instead of teaching that the age of the earth must be counted by millions of years, modern geology dares not to count it by more than thousands, thus contradicting instead of confirming the evolution theory.

From a scientific point of view we can not help but believe, therefore, that the system of evolution is built on no more than vague analogies and inferences, and not on demonstrable facts. The world may be much

older than is commonly supposed, but that does not prove the evolution theory.

But also because it is unbiblical do we as Christians reject it.

It is unbiblical because it:

1. Contradicts the story of creation as revealed in Genesis.

2. Contradicts revelation that man originally was made in God's image, good and upright, perfectly endowed and qualified to be God's vice-gerent on earth. Adam in Scripture and the first man of the evolutionists are two extremes, the extremes of the highest and lowest levels.

3. Contradicts the story of the fall and the doctrine of original sin.

To the evolutionists there is no original sin inherent in man as the result of a fall in sin, there is only a survival of the weaknesses and limitations of the animal.

4. Contradicts the biblical doctrine of the atonement of Christ.

Evolutionists do not speak of sin as the Bible does, they ignore particularly the guilt of sin, and, therefore, can not appreciate that Christ's death was necessary to satisfy divine justice in the sinner's stead. The evolutionist looks upon Christ as the best example of a perfect man, the most evolved man, whom to follow he recommends. Or if he believes in the incarnation of the Son of God, he believes that Christ brought the divine life into the human that the human might have a divine sphere into which it may develop. Thus the incarnation has made possible the growth from monkeydom into divinity.

5. Contradicts the necessity of regeneration by the Holy Spirit as the Bible teaches. It uses the terms re-

generation and new birth, but attaches to these terms an unbiblical idea, that signifies no more than moral self-improvement.

Regeneration in the biblical sense is a miracle of grace; it is being made a new creature in Christ Jesus. Evolutionists seeks to avoid all miracles, and thus seek to reason that the new birth is but the evolving into consciousness of man's native religious nature.

6. Contradicts the law of God which requires love to others as to self.

Evolution teaches that it is perfectly natural and right that in "the struggle for existence" there should be a "survival of the fittest." The fittest is the strongest, and if it is right and natural that the strongest should crush the weakest, there need not be in the human world any sacrifice and self-denial in love to the weakest. Consistent evolution justifies the crushing of the weak, stimulates selfishness and contradicts the law of love.

A consistent evolutionary view of life is therefore very different from that of the Bible, and whoever believes in evolution will come to lose his faith in our Reformed confession. May God save us from being led astray by the bold and sweeping assertions of this at present so popular but also passing theory. In its religious and moral applications it is positively dangerous.

We thankfully acknowledge the great work the advocates of evolution have done in extending our knowledge of nature, but we fail to find any solid ground in the information they furnish us for the conclusions and hypotheses they make.

Is the doctrine of creation an essential part of our faith?

Yes, indeed, it has not only a scientific value, answer-

ing the ever recurring question: from where is everything; but it above all has a deep religious significance. The conviction, God is the Creator of the universe, leads us to recognize him in the forces and laws of the world, to see his hand in the dispositions of his providence, and to depend on him and obey him in humility of heart. Our conviction that the world is the product of the creative Word of God makes possible also our faith in the restoration of all things to their original and proper purpose. Since God is Creator he can and will restore what sin has perverted. God's purpose in creation will be reached, Satan shall not triumph, the Creator will again be the Regenerator of his creation, to the glory of his name.

ANGELS

Did God create any creatures in heaven?

Yes, angels, some of whom fell afterwards and became devils.

In the account of creation in Genesis we do not read of the creation of angels, but very early they appear in sacred history, as e.g., the cherubim who was placed at the east of the garden of Eden, after man was driven out.

We read of the appearance of angels in the history of the lives of Abraham, Hagar, Lot, Jacob, Moses, Israel in the desert, Joshua, Gideon, David, Elijah, Elisha, Daniel, Mary and Joseph, Jesus, Peter and John, Cornelius, John on Patmos, and others.

These appearances were usually in human form, but whether they were real bodies of flesh and blood or only apparitions, we do not know, though it seems most probable that their bodies were something new, assumed temporarily for the purpose of holding communion with men.

The nature of angels is spiritual, in this they differ from us who are both spiritual and corporeal.

Heb. 1:14: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation?"

Luke 24:39: "For a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having."

When were the angels created?

The Bible does not specifically say when they were created, as they belong to the sphere of heaven, it is generally assumed that they were created in the beginning of the work of creation, when God made the heavens.

Job 38:4, 7: "Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? . . . When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?"

What do the Scriptures teach concerning the number of the angels?

That it is very great: Dan. 7:10. "Thousand thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand."

Matt. 26:53: "More than twelve legions of angels."

Luke 2:13: "Multitude of the heavenly host."

Heb. 12:22: "Myriads of angels."

Is there evidence that angels are divided in various orders and ranks?

Yes, this appears:

1. From the language of Scripture, Gabriel is distinguished as standing in the presence of God in a pre-eminent sense (Luke 1:19), and Michael as one of the chief princes (Dan. 10:13). They are spoken of as arch-angels, thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers.

2. From the analogy of the fallen angels. Matt. 12:26-28.

3. From the analogy of human society and universal creation.

Throughout all God's works gradation and rank prevails.

What are the employments of angels?

I. In heaven they behold the face of God, adore the divine perfections, study God's revelations in providence and redemption, and sing praises to the glory of God. Matt. 18:10; I Pet. 1:12; Rev. 5:11.

II. On earth God employs them as his instruments in the administration of providence:

1. The law was ordained through angels. Acts 7:53.

Gal. 4:19: "What then is the law? It was added because of transgressions till the seed should come to whom the promise hath been made; and it was ordained through angels by the hand of a mediator."

2. They are messengers and instruments of good to God's people. Acts 12:7.

Heb. 1:14: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation?"

3. They execute judgment on God's enemies. II Kings 19:35.

Acts 12:23: "And immediately an angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory; and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost."

4. They will officiate in the final judgment, in separating the good from the bad, in gathering the elect and bearing them up to meet the Lord in the air. Matt. 13:39. I Thess. 4:17.

Are the angels related to one another as we are?

No, among them are no parents and children, brothers and sisters, etc., as among us. They are all created at once as separate individuals. Among them there is,

therefore, no covenant relation as with us, where we and our children are together in covenant relation with God. With the angels every person stands and falls individually, without affecting others. Mark 12: 25.

May we worship or invoke the intercession of angels?

No, we may honor, but may not worship them. Rev. 22: 8, 9. And as to the invoking of the intercession of angels, the Bible gives us no direction or encouragement to this. The invoking of the help of angels is like the invoking of Mary, purely of human invention. The angels are deeply interested in us, but we can have no conscious fellowship with them. It is a comfort to know that they are ministering spirits for God's people.

What proof have we that the devils were once good angels?

II Pet. 2: 4: "For if God spared not angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell, and committed them to pits of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment." Jude 6.

From these texts it is evident that God did not make devils, but that through sin good angels fell to be devils. How this was possible is a mystery.

The fallen angels are a great number, at the head of whom stands Satan, also called Beelzebub. Matt. 10:25, 12: 24, 27. Eph. 6: 12. Col. 2: 15.

Pride seems to have been the first sin of the devils. I Tim. 3: 6.

The fall of the angels has had grave consequences for themselves and us, for they became our tempters.

Satan and his angels will never be restored. They are fallen deeper than we.

The gravity of Satan's fall consists in:

1. That he has sinned without being tempted.

2. That he has become entirely wicked, hating God and delighting in evil for evil's sake, and is beyond the possibility of repentance.

3. That his sins are unpardonable.

Have Satan and his forces great influence upon the bodies and souls of men?

Yes, back of all sins and wickedness in the world are the devils, who delight in human corruption and misery. Their influence upon the souls of men is exercised in the way of deception, suggestion and persuasion. They can not change our hearts or force our wills, but they do mislead and persuade the heart that will listen to their wiles.

The devils may deceive us as angels of light, or they may bring terror to the heart as roaring lions.

But Satan is entirely under God's control, and can go no further than God allows; he must even serve the purposes of God to the improvement of his Church and the glory of his name. When Satan assails and tempts the saints he intends their injury, but he only serves to drive them eventually farther from himself and closer to God.

In the history of the world God allows and uses the raging of Satan to bring out to view of heaven and earth the impotence and vanity of sin as a means of happiness, and to show forth the abhorrent character of the powers of darkness. The result of all Satan's raging will be bankruptcy and despair. God allows Satan full play, to triumph over him in the glory of righteousness at the last day, when he will hurl him into outer darkness. God will maintain himself.

Beware, do not cast in your lot with Satan.

PROVIDENCE

What do we mean by the providence of God?

That God upholds and governs the world and its fulness to a certain determinate end.

Here we must quote the beautiful answer of our Heidelberg Catechism in full:

“The almighty and everywhere present power of God; whereby, as it were by his hand, he upholds and governs heaven, earth and all creatures; so that herbs and grass, rain and drought, fruitful and barren years, meat and drink, health and sickness, riches and poverty, yea, and all things come not by chance, but by his fatherly hand.” Heb. 1: 3.

What does divine providence include?

1. Preservation; 2. Coöperation; 3. Government.

What is preservation?

Preservation is that continual exercise of the divine energy whereby the Creator upholds all his creatures in being, and also upholds in his creatures those properties and qualities with which he endowed them at creation or which they may later have acquired. By his preservation God upholds the substance, the attributes and the form of everything as long as he wills.

Thus God preserves the material of the sun, of the earth, the water and the air, preserves the qualities and shape of every part of creation. God preserves the whole and every part, every atom of the whole of anything. Every part of creation is absolutely dependent on the will of God, it can no more continue than it can originate its being.

If God withdrew from anything it would be annihilated.

Acts 17: 28: “In him we live and move and have our being.”

Heb. 1: 3: "Upholding all things by the word of his power."

What is coöperation?

It is that act of God whereby he coöperates in every action of the creature. God has put into his creation certain powers or forces, these forces can not, however, act independently, but in every act or movement of these forces God coöperates, that is, his divine energy acts with the action of the creature, even determines the creature to act as it does.

We must not think that God has given the creature a certain amount of power and now lets the creature act with this power independently as it wills. Neither must we think that God does part and the creature part of every act. The creature acts and does the whole act, and yet God also does the whole act. God's action precedes and conjoins the creature's action.

Phil. 2: 13: "For it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure." Acts 17:28.

What is the government of God?

The almighty act of God whereby he continually controls and directs the action of his creatures so that they reach the end determined by him. In creating the world God had a definite aim in view, and he had a definite plan according to which he rules everything for the accomplishment of his design. God did not create the world to leave it henceforth to the control of a blind fate, but he himself governs the minutest detail. In heaven and earth, in nature and in grace he is executing his eternal decree. Not only does his government concern the good but also the bad. God hates evil, but in his sovereign pleasure he allows it, regulates and checks it, and punishes it.

For us there are many difficulties and apparent con-

traditions in the government of God, we can not understand why this or that occurs, but our view is very limited; God's thoughts are above ours as the heavens above the earth, and he who is wise and good and righteous makes no mistake.

Matt. 10: 29, 30: "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? and not one of them shall fall on the ground without your Father, but the very hairs of your head are all numbered."

Eph. 1: 11: "He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

James 4: 13-15; I Sam. 2; Pss. 103, 104, etc.

Who deny the doctrine of providence more or less?

Those who ascribe things to fate or good fortune or luck.

Through sin man has lost contact with God, and many have even so deeply sunken that they know not of the true God any more, others are such enemies of his revelation that they deny all providential superintendence. But all, however, experience that their lives and the whole history of the world is in control of a power superior to themselves, this power men then call fate, fortune, luck or nature. Whatever it may be called, it is a blind force, and not an intelligent Person, to which the control of life is attributed. Let us be careful not to use the words luck or fortune or fate, leave that to the children of the world. We believe in God's providence, in the care of his love. A materialistic age worships nature, but knows not the God of nature.

In this connection we would advise against all games of chance. They wean the soul away from the recognition of God's providence, and by them we are drawn into the worldly circles where the poor souls are trusting in good luck or fortune.

But does not this providence destroy the freedom and responsibility of man?

No, God governs us consistent with our nature and choice.

God rules us according to his plan and will, and yet we are free moral beings, whatever we do, we do willingly and feel responsible for. God rules us, but he does not force our will or control our lives contrary to our nature, but within our soul God by suggestion and persuasion influences us in such a way that we voluntarily do as he wills. If we were forced to do anything we did not want to do or what was entirely contrary to our nature we would not be free, and, therefore, not responsible.

It is admitted, however, that we can not fully fathom the connection between God's government and our liberty and responsibility.

We know that God is Sovereign over us, and also that we are free to do as we do and are responsible to God. This both Scripture and reason teach.

Does not divine providence render the use of means unnecessary?

No, for God as a rule makes use of means to carry out his purpose. God could reach his purpose immediately, that is, without means. He could, e. g., feed us with bread from heaven, and heal our bodies without medicine, or he could in an instant transfer a bird to a place a mile distant, but that is not God's will. He works through means as a rule. He has put in creation such resources and forces and laws that one thing is dependent on the other, and all together constitutes an organized whole. God is the first cause of all things, but it is his rule to carry out his plans through means or second causes.

The same is true in the kingdom of grace; God could save us and take us to heaven at once, without our using any means, but it is his will to save us and advance us in salvation through his word and the sacraments, and according to a fixed process to grant us the various blessings of Christ, the one blessing preparing for the other.

It is our duty to study the resources and laws of everything and then learn to use them for our welfare and God's honor.

It is not a proper conception of divine providence that leads man to neglect the means and to expect strange interventions from above.

What are miracles?

Miracles are events wrought by the special and extraordinary working of God's power.

In the ordinary course of events the providence of God works through the forces and according to the established laws of nature. But God, the Maker and Governor of the forces and laws of nature, may intervene with the working of his almighty power and thereby produce an unusual event. Thus it is usual according to the law of gravitation that iron should sink in water, but God's power can cause it to float, if he wills that it should, and as actually occurred, II Kings 6: 6. This is no contradiction or suspension of the laws of nature, it is rather a working of God's power above the usual course of nature; so also in the making of the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the dead to arise.

All the miracles of Scripture are grouped around the great crisis in the work of redemption, and their purpose plainly was to authenticate the divine commission

and truth of God's messengers. Their purpose is religious.

What advantage do we derive from the doctrine of providence?

"That we may be patient in adversity; thankful in prosperity; and in all things, which may hereafter befall us, we place our firm trust in our faithful God and Father, that nothing shall separate us from his love; since all creatures are so in his hand, that without his will they can not so much as move." *Heidelberg Catechism. Q. 28.*

This beautiful answer ought to be learned by heart and impressed upon the souls of all; then would we be saved from pride and vanity in prosperity, from despondency and despair in adversity, and from worry and fretting about the events that may come in the future.

Faith in providence is the basis of confidence in the possibility of redemption, of the efficacy of prayer, and causes the soul to rest in God.

CHAPTER III

THE DOCTRINE OF MAN

What subdivisions are included under this head?

1. Creation and original state of man.
2. The covenant of works.
3. The fall of man and doctrine of sin.
4. The covenant of grace.

CREATION AND ORIGINAL STATE OF MAN

How did man originate?

Man originated by a creative act of God. After God had created heaven and earth, had separated water and land, had blessed the earth with the vegetable kingdom, had created birds and fishes, he on the sixth day created the animals and man. Man was created last, all other things were made before him, that they might be ready for his service when he was brought forth. Man was intended to be the crown creation, the vice-gerent of God on earth.

State the evidence that man was originated by an immediate creation of God?

1. This is explicitly taught in the Bible. Gen. 1: 27: "God created man in his own image."

See Gen. 1: 26, 27; 2: 7.

2. This is implied by the immeasurable gulf which separates man in his savage condition from the very nearest order of the animal creation.

The theory of evolution maintains that man is the offspring of the brute creation, and was brought forth

at the end of a long process of natural development, but for this there is no proof. (See Evolution under head of Creation.) There certainly is analogy between man and some species of animals, but similarity in certain respects does not prove the descent of man from the animal.

And in respect to man's intellectual, moral and religious nature there is an absolute difference between him and the nearest animal.

Of what did God make man?

His body God made of the dust of the ground, his soul God originated by breathing into his nostrils the breath of life.

Man is therefore related to the material creation about him as far as his body is concerned, and related to the spiritual things as far as his soul is concerned.

He is fit to stand in connection with both the material and the spiritual world.

What is the relation of soul and body in man?

They together form a living organism, the soul animates and controls the body, and the body also influences the soul. Some of the workings of the body are the result of the conscious working and willing of the soul, other actions of the body are performed without the conscious effort of the soul, as e. g., respiration and digestion.

How many faculties has God given in our soul?

We commonly distinguish three; the intellect or the reasoning power, the will or the power of choosing, and the feeling also called affection or emotion. The soul of man is not an organized whole consisting of various parts, as the body does, and when we speak of three faculties we do not mean three distinct parts, but rather

three functions exercised by the one soul. The soul reasons, wills and feels.

What theories are advanced to explain the origin of the souls that are now born?

There are three theories: Traducianism, Creationism, and Pre-existentism. Traducianism teaches that the souls of children like their bodies are derived from their parents by natural generation.

Creationism teaches that each soul is created by God in each child some time before birth.

Pre-extentionism teaches that all souls were in the beginning created by God, but are later placed in their respective bodies.

Which of these theories is most acceptable?

In regard to the last named, pre-existentism, we may say it has never found acceptance in our circles; it is too fanciful, and is not supported by any statement of Scripture or any analogy of nature.

Some Reformed theologians have believed in traducianism, but the greater number believe in creationism.

Do we believe in the unity of the human race?

Yes, we believe the whole of humanity has descended from Adam and is a unity, no matter what their present color or condition may be.

Some naturalists have believed that mankind is not a unity, but that the several varieties of men have originated independently of one another.

Scripture teaches that our race is a unity, and it is essential for us to maintain this. The unity of the race is the foundation on which is built the scriptural teaching of our responsibility in Adam's fall, of original sin, and of the possibility of redemption through one Mediator, Jesus.

The unity of the race is proven from the following:

I. Acts 17: 26: "And he made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth."

Rom. 5: 12: "Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned." See I Cor. 15: 21, 22.

2. The higher moral and religious natures of all varieties of mankind are alike.

3. The unity of the race is indicated by history and the comparative study of languages.

4. It is a fact universally admitted by naturalists, that the crossing of different species of animals are never freely fertile, and that the offspring of such unions are seldom if ever fertile. But all the varieties of mankind freely intermix, and the offspring of all such unions propagate themselves indefinitely with perfect facility.

What was the state of the first man at his creation?

"We believe that God created man out of the dust of the earth, and made and formed him after his own image and likeness, good, righteous and holy, capable in all things to will, agreeably to the will of God." *Confession of Faith*, Art. XIV.

What does it mean that man was made after the image and likeness of God?

It means that there was a likeness of some of the perfections of God's Being in man. Man was in a limited way a likeness, a copy of what God is in an unlimited way.

The original image of God can well be distinguished in a wider and in a narrower sense.

1. In a wider sense we refer especially to man's intellectual and moral nature. By his intellectual nature we mean man's power to think and reason and to intel-

ligently direct his life. By his moral nature we mean that man knows the difference between right and wrong, and that he feels himself enjoined in his conscience to a right conduct. The body of man may also be included in the image of God in a wider sense. We do not mean to say that God has a body, but man's body as an organized unity with the soul, as the animated habitation and instrument of the soul, also reflects in a material form the glory of God. The entire man is a manifestation of the image of God. This man is, even after his fall in sin, though dulled and stunted, man is yet an intelligent moral being.

God is a Spirit, the human soul is also a spirit. The essential attributes of a spirit are reason, will and conscience. In making man after his own image, therefore, God endowed him with those attributes which belong to his own nature as a Spirit. Man is thereby distinguished from all other creatures, and raised immeasurably above them, he belongs to the same order of beings as God himself, and is therefore capable of communion with his maker. This likeness to God is the foundation of our religious nature. If we were not like God we could not know him. We would be as the beasts that perish.

2. By the image of God in a narrower sense we mean especially man's original knowledge, righteousness and holiness. This refers particularly to the perfect quality of man's being, which he has since lost through sin.

By knowledge we mean that Adam knew himself and his God, and had also the proper appreciation of the nature of material objects that surrounded him. Especially of God and of spiritual things did he have an accurate, living and practical knowledge. By righteousness we mean that Adam was in full harmony with the law

of God. There was no discord or division in his nature, but every part was subordinated to and in harmony with God. By holiness we mean that Adam was without sin and devoted to God. There was no tendency to evil in him, his character was pure and undefiled, his whole nature was a reflection of the holiness of God.

That this was the original image of God we perceive from Col. 3:10 and Eph. 4:24. Here Paul speaks of the new man that is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him, and of the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. These works, *knowledge, righteousness and holiness*, are *intended* to be exhaustive as a description of the new man, which is restored in the heart of God's people. Now that which is restored is what Adam lost. So we from these texts learn what the image of God was like in a very special sense.

Man was not created in an indifferent or neutral state, that is neither good nor bad, without a holy character, nor was he in a state of infancy, a sort of an imbecile who was slowly to awaken and develop, but he was created a mature man in a state of perfection.

Do we then mean that the human race, as it existed in Adam before the fall, had reached the highest state of excellence of which it was capable?

No, had Adam not fallen there would have been development, Adam was perfectly happy, without any defect, but he could have gained higher excellence, greater knowledge and joy. Adam had not reached the limit of increase, that would mean stagnation and consequent unhappiness. Adam was not created to stay in one fixed condition. He was at the beginning and not at the end of the way. He could increase, and he could also fall. He was a changeable being, who had the possi-

bility of sinning and of not sinning. If he sinned the wages of sin were death; if he did not sin, he would have reached that point where he could not sin nor die. His life was holy, but Adam was not yet confirmed in the possession of life, he was to undergo a trial in order to be confirmed in his state and gain eternal life. Consistent obedience to the will of God, according to the arrangements of the Covenant of Works, would have secured eternal life unto Adam and all his descendants.

COVENANT OF WORKS

What was the covenant of works?

A covenant is an agreement. The covenant of works was an agreement between God and Adam, wherein God promised eternal life to Adam and all his posterity, upon condition of perfect obedience to the probationary command not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, God threatening that Adam would die in case he broke this command.

The elements of this covenant therefore were:

1. A condition expressed: perfect obedience.
2. A promise implied: eternal life.
3. A penalty threatened: death.

Adam stood in a two-fold relation towards God: as creature and as covenant head. Adam as a creature of God was naturally under obligation to love and serve his Maker, but to this natural relation of Creator and creature God added the covenant relation.

As God's creature Adam had to obey his Maker individually for himself, without any regard to his descendants.

As placed under the condition of the covenant of works by God he acted not alone for himself, but was the representative of the human race; if he was faithful

to the trial command of God he would have secured eternal life for all his posterity, if he broke the trial command he would bring upon all his descendants the penalty: "in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

Adam was the covenant or federal head of the human race. The covenant of which Adam was the head is called "covenant of works," because it was through work of obedience that he was to gain eternal life, in contrast to the covenant of grace, wherein eternal life is obtained as a free gift of God's grace.

Why do we believe this doctrine of the covenant of works?

1. We must admit it is not systematically taught in Scripture as we have explained it above, nor does the name covenant of works occur in the Bible, yet we are justified and necessitated for a clear apprehension of Adam's original position and of his relation to us to use the term "covenant of works" and to give to it the meaning above described, since all the elements of a covenant are distinctly found in the descriptions of Adam; all we do is to put the various elements in systematic order and call the whole "the covenant of works." We do not imply that an actual transaction of covenant making occurred between God and Adam as between two equals, for God and man are not equals, and so the original relation of Adam towards God was not a compact entered into by mutual consideration, rather was the covenant of works a constitution imposed upon man by God, to which man readily consented, since he was in fullest harmony with God. The Sovereign Creator revealed the way to life eternal, to this way Adam consented,—thus the covenant was formed.

2. Hosea 6: 7 (R.V.): "But they, like Adam, have

transgressed the covenant." Here it is plainly stated that Adam stood in covenant relation with God.

3. In Rom. 5: 12-21, Paul draws a parallel between Adam and Christ. He declares that sin and death have come to us from Adam as righteousness and life come to us from Christ. Righteousness and life are secured to us without any action of our own, are imputed and given to us because of the work of Christ, so sin and death are our portion because of what Adam has done, without any conscious effort or work of our own, but as a result of covenant relationship. Adam and Christ are both covenant heads, their acts are imputed and charged to those they represent. To refuse to believe that Adam was our covenant head would require refusal to believe that Christ's merits could become ours."

Rom. 5: 12-21: "Therefore as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so"

4. The fundamental principle of one representing many underlies all the religious institutions ever ordained by God for men. God always deals with us according to this principle.

And this fundamental principle of the covenants finds its counterpart in the relations of men, and is here recognized as valid. Rulers represent their people; parents their children; guardians their wards. We all suffer or profit according as our representatives do.

5. A strong proof for the covenant relation between Adam and us is that everything said in the sentence pronounced on Adam and Eve after their fall has come on us. We suffer as they did, because we were counted in them, we sinned in them. Read Gen. 3.

Why did God enter into covenant relation with Adam?

Because he desired the free and voluntary love and service of man. Man, as the angels, was gifted with the power of reason and a free will, and nothing less than a willing service of man could satisfy God. This would be best understood and secured if man stood in covenant relation to God.

All other creatures God controlled without any choice of their own, he influences their instinct or constrains them to involuntarily do his will. With them he makes no agreement, to them he makes no appeal and offers no reward. A covenant with the animal and vegetable world is impossible.

But man, made in God's image, can understand God and agree or disagree to serve him. That man might show whether he would freely serve his Maker, God entered into a covenant with him, and tried him by the probationary command not to eat of the forbidden tree.

The special command not to eat of the forbidden tree was given to be the outward and visible test to determine whether Adam was willing to obey God in all things. The eating of the tree was not wrong in its own nature, but was wrong because God had forbidden it. By leaving alone the fruit he would show that his whole life was subject to God, and his eating would prove that his heart was contrary to the holy will of his Creator. No fairer trial than the human race thus had in Adam can be conceived of, since he was created in full possession of all his faculties and in the image of God.

What did the promise of eternal life include?

It included the happy, holy and immortal existence of soul and body. Eternal life flows from the favor and fellowship of God, and includes glory, honor and immortality; the exaltation and complete blessedness of

both soul and body. Thus privileged with life Adam would have been prophet, priest and king on earth, and everything else would have been subdued unto him in the service of God. This blessed state will be the heritage of those saved by Christ, and they will never lose it, because they, for the merits of their Redeemer's sake, are kept by the power of God.

What was included in the penalty of death as threatened?

1. Bodily death.
2. Spiritual death.
3. Eternal death.

Bodily death is the final breaking of the union of soul and body, and the consequent dissolution of the body.

Bodily death becomes complete when the body is a corpse, though previous to this, death is already at work in all of us in the sickness and weakness of the flesh.

In Adam's case complete bodily death was long postponed by the patience of God. He lived to be 930 years.

Spiritual death is the breaking of the spiritual connection between God and man, it is the separation of man from the source and fountain of his life. In consequence of this separation man is dead through trespasses and sins. Eph. 2: 1.

Spiritual death came over Adam as soon as he had sinned. The sweet union between his soul and God was then broken, therefore he feared and tried to hide from God.

Eternal death is the eternal separation of soul and body from God in the miseries of hell, where hope is forever excluded and mercy lost.

Eternal death is also called second death, Rev. 2: 11; 20: 6; 21: 8. This term, "second death," is significant,

it refers back to a death already existing, it is an intensified form of what already exists, it is the intense and final form of death. Eternal death is the continuation of the evils and pains which are the just consequences of sin.

Death in all three forms is the punishment of sin.

Can we gain eternal life at present through the covenant of works?

No, for we can never fulfill the condition of the covenant of works. If we could be born without sin and should never thereafter sin, we might gain eternal life as reward for obedience, but this is impossible. The penalty of the covenant of works rests upon all, for all are sinners. The covenant of works condemns us.

Thanks to the grace of God that he has revealed another covenant, the covenant of grace, in the stead of the broken and condemning covenant of works.

What Adam lost, Christ has gained for his people.

THE FALL

We have seen that God created man holy and capable of doing all he required of him, that he promised man eternal life as a reward of obedience, and threatened death as a punishment of disobedience. It now rests upon us to examine how man behaved himself under this arrangement of God.

Did Adam keep the covenant of works?

No, he broke the covenant by eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which God had forbidden him. Gen. 2: 16, 17; Gen. 3.

Canons of Dordrecht III: 1: "Man was originally formed after the image of God. His understanding was adorned with a true saving knowledge of his Creator,

and of spiritual things; his heart and will were upright; all his affections pure; and the whole man was holy: but revolting from God by the instigation of the devil, and abusing the freedom of his own will, he forfeited these excellent gifts; and on the contrary entailed on himself blindness of mind, horrible darkness, vanity and perverseness of judgment; and became wicked, rebellious, and obdurate in heart and will, and impure in his affections."

What was the tree of knowledge of good and evil?

The nature of the tree and of its fruits we do not know. There was no inherent virtue to give knowledge in the tree, but according to the will of God his eating of the tree gave Adam a practical and experimental knowledge of good and evil which he had not before. Before Adam ate of this tree he had the happiness of innocence, he knew not in experience what sin and sorrow were.

Why is Satan accused of having misled our first parents, when Eve herself says that the serpent misled her and she ate?

The serpent was only the instrument of Satan. This is evident:

1. From the nature of the transaction recorded in Gen. 3. What is ascribed to the serpent far surpasses the power of any irrational creature. The serpent was very cunning, and therefore by nature adapted to be the tool of the devil, but he had not the high intellectual faculties which the tempter displayed.

2. In the New Testament Satan is called the great dragon, the old serpent, the devil, which deceiveth the whole world. Rev. 12: 9.

3. In John 8: 44 Jesus calls Satan a murderer from the beginning and the father of lies. II Cor. 11: 3, 14.

4. From the sentence which God pronounced on

the serpent after the fall of man it is also evident that he had reference not only to the serpent but to the power back of this animal. See Gen. 3: 14, 15.

Was the first temptation of Eve by Satan cunningly plotted?

Yes, indeed. He first caused her to doubt and then stirred her natural pride and lust. This is yet ever the way he leads poor sinners into deeper sin.

First he tried to make her doubt, whether she had understood the command of God rightly, and when she declared she did, he boldly contradicted God, by declaring they would not die as God has threatened, thus throwing the seed of doubt and distrust into her mind.

Then he also wickedly played on her natural desire to be more God-like, by promising that if she would eat of the forbidden tree, her eyes would be opened and she would be like God. To increase in knowledge and power was a good, natural desire, a desire which would be realized through obedience, but Satan promised she would realize her desire in the way of disobedience. Here was deception and perversion, which forms the power of sin. Furthermore, the inordinate lust of the flesh was stirred, when Eve saw that the tree was good for food, and a delight to the eyes.

Instead of indignantly rejecting the suggestion to eat of the forbidden tree, Eve argued with the tempter and allowed the evil suggestion to make her waver in her loyalty to God, and from this wavering to the actual eating of the fruit was an easy step. To argue with the devil, to entertain the thought of sin, means to be overcome.

Jas. 4: 7: "Resist the devil and he will flee from you."

Are we able to account for the fall of Adam?

No, there are many questions here that we can not answer, and it is best that we do not seek to know more than God has revealed to us. The first question is: How or why did God tolerate sin in his creation? Our answer is: God had his own reasons for allowing it, hence it was right for him to do so. We must submit, God makes no mistake and does no wrong. Deut. 32: 4; Hab. 1: 13; Jäs. 1: 13.

The second question is: How could sin originate in the will of a creature created with a positive holy disposition?

Various attempts have been made to explain how this was possible, but after all has been said it remains a mystery.

What relation did God bear to Adam's first sin?

In regard to this we may say:

1. God gave Adam all the natural powers necessary to do what was required.
2. God withheld from him, during his probation, the higher supernatural powers that might have made it impossible for Adam to sin.
3. God did not cause or approve Adam's sin.
4. God sovereignly decreed to permit Adam to sin.

Adam's sin was not a surprise to God, and had he willed he might have made it impossible, but God did not cause or approve of his sin. For reasons sufficient unto himself God decreed to permit the fall.

What were the immediate consequences of their sin for Adam and Eve?

1. An immediate sense of guilt and dread of God, and the consequent desire to hide away from his presence.
2. A sense of shame, expressed in their desire to clothe themselves with fig leaves.

3. The loss of God's favor and of blessed communion with him.

4. A total corruption of the nature of their heart. Spiritual death overcame them immediately.

Does this disobedience of Adam concern us?

Certainly, for he is the father of us all, and we have all sinned in him.

Canons of Dordrecht III: 2: "Man after the fall begat children in his own likeness. A corrupt stock produced a corrupt offspring. Hence all the posterity of Adam, Christ only excepted, have derived corruption from their original parent, not by imitation, as the Pelagians of old asserted, but by the propagation of a vicious nature."

How could we all sin in Adam?

Because Adam was the head of the Covenant of Works.

(See former chapter on covenant of works)

The connection between Adam's sin and our sin, or our having sinned in him, cannot well be explained by simply saying that he was the father of us all. The natural relation of father and child might explain why we are polluted and corrupted in our hearts by nature, but it does not explain our original guilt. The child can not be charged with the guilt of another, simply because that other person is his father. Yet we believe we are not only polluted, but also guilty in and through Adam. The sin of eating of the forbidden tree is charged against everyone that is born. This is explained by the idea of the covenant of works.

ORIGINAL SIN

What sin do we inherit from Adam in consequence of his covenant breaking?

Original sin, which includes both original guilt and pollution.

We are not only responsible for sin we have actually committed, but we also inherit sin; we are born in sin.

Ps. 51: 5: "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."

John 3: 6: "All that is born of the flesh is flesh."

Original sin, as guilt, is from the first charged against us by God; it is the sin of breaking the probationary command in Adam, our representative. We are not charged with all of Adam's sin, only his sin of eating of the forbidden tree. Of this sin God said: "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt die." Death was the punishment for the guilt of this sin, and so we constantly see even little children die, who have no guilt of sin they themselves have committed; but if they had no guilt they would not die. It proves therefore that they are counted guilty in Adam, and being guilty, they share the penalty of guilt.

Original sin, as pollution or corruption, is the internal depravity of heart, which we all inherit with the origin of our being from our ancestors. We are born without the holy character, the godly nature of heart, which Adam originally had, but instead our nature is unholy, the natural tendency of our lives is contrary to God. The nature of a human being, even of an infant, is either good or evil, there never were nor will be any neutral hearts, that are neither good nor evil, without any positive tendency and choice for good or evil. Every one has a character or nature of heart, if this nature is godly the whole tendency of life will be godly, but if the heart is unholy the choice and direction of life is ungodly.

Now the plain teaching of Scripture and experience of human history is that all are born with sinful ten-

dency and that all are by nature inclined to be transgressors of God's law.

We are born with corrupted hearts. This does not mean that we are by nature as bad as we can be, as corrupt as the devil, or that all are equally wicked, but there is in all by nature an absence of true holiness and a presence of an evil nature.

Sin in us is not the result of following an evil example, as Pelagius taught, but is in us before ever any example can be followed. If a child were brought up by angels, who never gave it a bad example, it would yet grow up as a sinner, though it would undoubtedly be saved from much evil. The more ignorant of evil the more innocent, but total innocence is not possible for sinners.

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh";—"the mind of the flesh is enmity against God";—"they that are in the flesh cannot please God." John 3:6; Rom. 8:7, 8.

Has man then no free will to do either good or evil?

No, man has a free will to do evil, but unless he is born again of the Holy Spirit he does not and can not will to do the absolutely good with all his heart.

Adam's will was free to do either good or evil before the fall, but since our hearts are under the power of sin we cannot do otherwise than will to do wrong.

Man's will is free in this sense that he does whatever he does freely and without constraint. He is not forced against his will to do wrong, but his will is wrong in character, is evil in tendency. The nature of an animal determines the character of all it does, the nature of a tree determines its fruit, the nature of man's heart determines his will. Since his heart is evil he freely wills to do evil, but without regeneration he can not do the opposite.

Man is both unable and unwilling to do the absolutely good. Jer. 13:23.

Is man then still responsible for his sin if he can not do the perfectly good?

Yes, for God created man good originally. Through our own sin in Adam we have become unable and unwilling to obey God perfectly. God need not lessen his holy demands on man though man has lost the power to live a holy life.

And furthermore, man sins willingly, and we surely ought to be held responsible for what we knowingly and willingly do.

But does not this teaching, that man is by nature unable and unwilling to serve God perfectly, make man careless, and cause him to say: let me do nothing but evil, because I can not do the good?

It may cause some to speak and act so carelessly, but this is a serious abuse of the sad truth of our depravity. Rather than harden in carelessness, man ought to deplore his natural impotence and enmity before God.

If we but follow the voice of God in our conscience we will not come to this hardened indifference.

Some are abusing this doctrine of man's inability when the demand of God comes to them to repent and turn from their evil ways. They carelessly and contentedly answer that they cannot, and thus continue to enjoy the pleasures of sin.

The proper thing for them to do would be to confess in deep sorrow their helplessness to God and implore his power and grace to turn and enable them to do his will.

It is well to remember that we cannot earn eternal life through our own righteousness, we are totally unable to deserve the least, and must be saved through

grace alone. On the other hand, remember it is our duty to do the good, and God will magnify his power in our weakness if we sincerely ask him.

But do not the unregenerate do much good?

The outward good of the unregenerate is the fruit of the common grace of God.

Though we emphasize the truth that man is spiritually dead through trespasses and sins, that he cannot and will not, if left to himself, do anything that is perfectly good—yet we are very ready and glad to recognize that the unregenerate do much that man must call good. The praise for this good we cannot, however, ascribe to man, but to the common grace of God.

We distinguish between particular, or saving grace, and common grace. God's common grace is shared in by all, and the life of everybody is improved by it. Common grace checks the working of sin, prevents the evil tendency of the sinful heart to give free and full expression to itself, and leads and guides man to do the good he does do. A tender conscience, a fear of the ruinous effects of sin, a respect for whatever is beneficial and orderly in social life, as well as government, civilization, education, a good public opinion, natural love of one for the other, all these are agencies for good in this sinful world, and all are gifts of God's common grace. Common grace has been active in every age, in every country, among heathen and christians. Whatever prosperity and refinement any have ever enjoyed was due to the working of this common grace. Today there are in nearly every community some who are not religious, who are not saved, but who, nevertheless, are refined, exemplary citizens and agreeable neighbors, these have received a rich amount of God's common grace.

If a man was left to himself, if sin in his heart was

not checked, and God did not prompt man to do the good he does, earth would soon be turned into hell, black darkness of despair would come over us without a ray of light to break the misery.

Even the world must say: what we are, we are through God's grace.

ACTUAL SIN

What other sin have we besides original sin?

Actual sin, committed by thought, word, and deed.

Mark 7:21-23: "From within, out of the heart of men, evil thoughts proceed, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, covetings, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, railing, pride, foolishness: all these evil things proceed from within and defile the man."

Matt. 12:36: "And I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."

Matt. 7:23: "Depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

The pollution of inward corruption of original sin is the source and cause of actual sin. A bitter fountain cannot bring forth sweet water. As soon as the soul acts the action will partake of the character of the soul, and thus a sinful heart will produce sinful actions. The greater part of actual sins is done by evil thoughts, in fact all actual sins are *begun* in thoughts. But not all evil thoughts express themselves in words and deed. What a world this would be if all the evil thoughts found expression!

Even the secrets of the heart of a child of God are still so greatly evil, so selfish and vile, that he must often abhor himself.

The thoughts of the heart are expressed mostly in

words, in vain, proud, deceitful and angry utterances of the mouth. The beautiful gift of speech is perverted to the use of sin.

And how many of the actions and deeds of the body are sinful, transgressions of God's law, because of the wicked intentions back of them, and are injurious to self and others.

Another distinction which we usually make in regard to actual sins is between sins of omission and commission. Sins of omission are sins of neglect, leaving undone what ought to be done.

James 4:17: "To him therefore that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

What wrong theories have been advanced as to the nature of sin?

1. The Manichean theory, which teaches that sin is a physical evil, the defilement of the Spirit by its union with the material body. The way to get rid of sin is to destroy the influence of the body on the soul, according to this view.

This theory makes sin necessary according to the very nature of men, and destroys its moral character.

2. The theory that sin is limitation of being, incompleteness or weakness. This theory also destroys the moral character of sin.

3. The theory that all sin consists in selfishness. Selfishness is not merely self-love, but the undue preference of our happiness to the happiness or welfare of others.

Our answer to this theory is, that there is generally selfishness present in all sin, but sin is more than selfishness, and it is also very possible that one may love the things of the world more than himself.

4. The theory that sin is sensuality, a yielding to the appetites and passions of the flesh.

Our answer to this theory is, that the rule of the flesh over the spirit certainly is sin, but sin is much more than sensuality. The devils have no flesh, and yet they are the greatest sinners. And such sins as pride and deceit have no sensual nature, but are nevertheless accounted grave forms of sin.

What is the radical fault in all the above theories?

They fail to take into account the relation of sin towards God.

Anything that is wrong in its relation towards God is sin. If there were no God, and no law of God, there could be no sin. All violation of God's law is sin, this may be in the way of selfishness, or sensuality, and in other ways, but what makes it sinful is that it does not conform to the divine law.

What does the Bible say is the nature of sin?

I John 3:4: "Sin is the transgression of the law," or better, as R. V. translates: "Sin is lawlessness." See Rom. 2:14, 15.

Sin is not a misfortune or a disease merely, it is an offense, disobedience, which deserves punishment. The law of God is the standard of right, any inconformity in heart or conduct to this law is sin. See Rom. 7:7; 3:20. Not only wilful disobedience is sin, also the absence of love to God in us is sin.

What is the Pelagian view of sin?

The Pelagian says that man is not born sinful, and that he can do all that is required of him, if he only wills to do it. He maintains that man has a perfectly free will to do either good or evil, and that sin is due to the fact that he exercises the power of his free will and deliberately chooses to sin. This view was first

formulated by Pelagius, who lived in the fifth century. This theory is contradicted by the Bible and our own conscience. Paul said he could not do the things he would; and why, if man can just as well be good as evil, is it that there never were any who have lived without sin?

Another view, closely related to the Pelagian, is called the Semi-Pelagian. This view maintains that man is sick and needs divine assistance to do the good, though man, under the influence of persuasion, and without divine influence, can turn to God and repent. This view is very popular in our day in many circles. This view is also unbiblical, for the Bible teaches man has no disposition to repent and believe except he be influenced by the Spirit of God.

Are all sins equally grievous?

No, but we must not think that any sin is a small matter in God's sight. Also remember that transgressions for us, who live under the light of God's word, are worse than the same sins are for the heathen.

Luke 12:47, 48: "And that servant who knew his lord's will, and made not ready, nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. And to whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom they commit much, of him will they ask the more."

What is the greatest sin that can be committed?

The sin against the Holy Spirit. For this sin there is no pardon.

Matt. 12:31, 32: "Therefore I say unto you, every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of

man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come."

Much has been written and said about this sin, and many children of God have been harassed almost to despair by the fear that they had committed it. It is, therefore, very necessary to seek the meaning of the above words of Jesus. For this purpose notice the connection in which they occur.

When Jesus was casting out the devils by the Spirit of God, his enemies declared that he did this through Beelzebub, the prince of the demons, and this slander of the Pharisees gave occasion to Jesus to utter the terrible warning.

His enemies presented the work of the Holy Spirit as if it were the work of the devil. This was a speaking against the Holy Spirit. In view of the connection of the words of Jesus about the sin against the Holy Spirit the best explanation has always been, that this sin is a conscious, intentional slandering of the Holy Spirit and his work. This sin could not be committed by a heathen, who knows nothing of the Holy Spirit, but only by him who knows the Spirit and has received some degree of enlightenment of the Spirit in his heart. Whoever has committed this sin becomes hard and constantly hardens in sin, going beyond the reach of possibility of repentance, because the Holy Spirit has left him to himself. If, therefore, there is yet sorrow for sin and a fear of committing this unpardonable sin, we may believe it has not been committed.

This sin is not the same as the grieving of the Holy Spirit of which Paul speaks in Eph. 4:30. Grieving is done by not yielding to the Spirit and going contrary to his promptings in the heart. But grieving is not

slandering the Spirit, though for the honor of God and our own welfare we must be careful not to grieve the Spirit. Grieving the Holy Spirit stunts and stops spiritual growth and is, therefore, injurious, but if repented of in true sorrow the Spirit will again manifest his favor to our hearts.

COVENANT OF GRACE

Following the discussion of the first man's fall into sin, of our own inherited and actual sin and its terrible consequences, comes the glad message of deliverance and salvation.

All mankind is aware of misery, though all do not know its true nature, and all seek for rescue in some way. The heathen are ever seeking in vain, only the grace of God can provide a way of escape from sin and its punishments. Deliverance must come from above. And deliverance has come from above. God has revealed an eternal counsel of redemption for the salvation of his people. Immediately after man sinned God revealed his just anger against sin in the judgments he pronounced upon the transgressors, but he also revealed his grace in tempering judgment with mercy, and promising that he would establish enmity between the woman and her seed and the serpent and his seed, and that the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent.

God did not allow sin to go unchecked, and Satan to ruin his creation altogether; and he did not cast man away from himself into hopeless despair. Immediately after the fall and repeatedly since, God has revealed his good pleasure to save a remnant of humanity.

The way in which God saves his people is according to the plan of the covenant of grace, according to a

gracious arrangement which he himself makes with his people.

The covenant of works is broken, its threatened punishment man can not escape, if left to himself; but God grants another covenant in its stead, the provision of which God himself will carry out unto the eternal life of his people.

As we saw in treating the covenant of works, God dealt with Adam as an intelligent creature; he had made man in his own image, and he ruled him differently from all other creatures. The animals God rules without consulting them. With man God did consult, him he ruled by moral persuasion. Of man God desired voluntary and loving obedience, therefore God made an agreement, a covenant with man.

Since the fall God still respects man's intellectual and moral nature, in saving man he again makes an agreement, a covenant with him. God's dealings with man are not magical, but ethical. God does not force his people against their own will to be saved, to love and to obey him, but he first makes them willing and enters into a covenant of grace with them. The plan and method of salvation is a covenant method.

This view of God's dealings with his people will greatly simplify our comprehension of the way of salvation and of our relations towards God.

What is the covenant of grace?

It is the gracious agreement between God and his people, whereby God promises them complete salvation in the way of faith, and they accept this in faith.

In human society a covenant in general is an agreement between two or more parties, sometimes it bears another name, as: a treaty, a contract, an arrangement, a stipulation, a disposition.

After it was well understood what a covenant was by the people of the first world, because of their dealings with one another, God entered into covenant relation with his people, and revealed the plan of salvation as a covenant between him and the people he called.

That God did thus present the plan of salvation under a form of a covenant is evident:

I. From the use of the words *B'rith* in the Old Testament and *Diatheke* in the New Testament.

The prevailing usage of the word *B'rith* in the Old Testament is to designate a mutual agreement between two or more parties.

Thus Abraham and Abimelech made a covenant (Gen. 21:27); Joshua made a covenant with the people (Josh. 24:25); Jonathan and David made a covenant (I Sam. 18:3). See I Sam. 20:16; I Kings 20:34.

For all these mutual compacts the word *B'rith* is used, and this safe word is used for transactions between God and man. Repeated mention is made of the covenant of God with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Gen. 15:18; 17:13, and of his remembering his covenant with Israel in Egypt, at Mt. Sinai, etc.

A little knowledge of the Old Testament will persuade that the dealings of God with Israel were all founded on and governed by the covenant relations between God and his people.

God is said to have remembered his covenant, to be true to his covenant, Israel is said to have broken the covenant, and to have renewed the covenant. Israel was treated as God's people and was specially privileged.

See Deut. 5:6; II Kings 23:3; II Chron. 15:12; II Kings 13:23; Ps. 81:9, 12; 89:1-5; Hosea 6:1-3; 11:7-9; 14:2-9; Ezekiel 20:9, 14, etc.

The word *Diatheke* in the New Testament, R. V., is consistently translated covenant. This word is derived from a verb that means to arrange, and is, therefore, used for any arrangement or disposition, especially of testaments; but in Scripture this word has uniformly the sense of a covenant, is used as a translation for the word *B'rith*, and to designate the covenant of God with believers.

Matt. 26:27, 28: "And he took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins." II Cor. 3:6.

Heb. 9:15: "And for this cause he is the mediator of a new covenant."

II. Not only from the plain meaning of the above words is the plan of salvation presented as a covenant, but also and more decidedly from the fact that the elements of a covenant are included in the plan of salvation.

There are parties, mutual promises and obligations, and conditions. All these belong to covenants. See Covenant of Works.

The plan of salvation, it is true, is not literally presented as a covenant everywhere, but the name is used to designate the method of God in dealing with his people unto their salvation, and when we bring all the various elements together we plainly have a covenant arrangement in both Old and New Testaments.

When was the covenant of grace revealed?

The promise and purpose of salvation was revealed immediately after the fall, but God did not formally enter into a covenant of grace with man till he made a covenant with Abraham. The blessings of salvation have been the same in all ages, were the same for Adam

and his children as for Abraham and for us, but the measure of these blessings and the comprehension of them have not ever been the same. God revealed more of his grace as time went on. To Adam and Eve, however, there was granted the revelation of a gracious purpose of God for their benefit. After they had sinned, God called the man and woman and the serpent to account and upon all did he pronounce his judgment. Gen. 3:9-19. To the serpent God said: "Because thou hast done this, cursed art thou above all the cattle, and above every beast of the field . . . and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Gen. 3:14,15. This curse pronounced upon the serpent had regard not so much to the irrational beast as to the spiritual tempter, the devil, who had used the serpent as his instrument, and the punishment which fell on the serpent was a symbol of Satan's punishment.

God declared he would put enmity between the woman and the serpent, between her seed and the seed of the serpent. By yielding to temptation friendship had originated between Eve and the serpent, but this friendship God declared would be changed into enmity, and wherever enmity towards Satan has arisen there had come friendship with God. As a result of the enmity towards Satan a struggle would ensue between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, and in this struggle the seed of the woman would bruise the head of the serpent.

The seed of the woman culminated in Christ who is preëminently the one who fights Satan. In his struggle against Satan his heel was bruised so that he was temporarily wounded and apparently stopped in his

course, but only temporarily, for he bruised the head of Satan, that is, he will yet completely crush him in death, and deliver thereby the spiritual seed of the woman.

In this curse pronounced upon Satan in the presence of Adam and Eve, there was a message of good-will of God to them, a ray of light to give them hope for the future. It was a beginning of the gospel. And certainly God must have revealed more of his plan of grace at other occasions; this is evident from the knowledge of God shown by Cain and Abel, Enoch, Noah, Job, Melchizedek, and Abraham. There was no restriction of the privileges and blessings of salvation to one people till several centuries after the flood, but all mankind was called to walk in God's ways, and all who did were blessed with the mercies of God, with a measure of the same covenant blessings which we receive, so that some even walked with God. Gen. 6:9.

The idea of covenanting with God to enjoy the blessings of salvation did not, however, stand out clear before man's mind till God himself revealed the plan of salvation to Abraham as a covenant of grace. To Abraham not only the blessings but also the form of the covenant was revealed. God directly declared he would establish his covenant between himself and Abraham and his seed for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto him and his seed after him. Gen. 17:7.

The dispensation of the blessings of salvation to Abraham and since assumes a covenant form. To summarize what was new in this covenant with Abraham we mention the following points:

1. A formal covenant was established.
2. This covenant was limited to one tribe.
3. The sacrament of circumcision was added as a sign and seal of the covenant relationship.

What covenant elements do we find in God's dealings with Abraham?

1. Condition: Faith in God. Faith did not earn or merit salvation for Abraham, but his receiving God's favors was suspended on his trusting absolutely on the Lord, and at every new manifestation of faith there was a new promise of God given to him.

2. An obligation, which God put in these words: "walk before me, and be thou perfect." Gen. 17:1.

3. The promise: "I will be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee." Gen. 17:7.

There were other promises also made to Abraham, promises of a multitude of descendants, of all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession, and of great outward prosperity, if Abraham and his seed walked obedient to God, but these did not constitute the principal blessing. The main and special blessing was of a spiritual nature, to which those of a material nature were added as an extra favor for Israel during the Old Testament dispensation.

The spiritual blessing was that God was the God of Abraham and his seed. This promise embraced all other spiritual blessings. It meant that God removed every bar of separation between himself and his people, that he would communicate himself in the fulness of his love to his people, and would bless them as the special objects of his favor, and God's favor is life.

This promise was not fulfilled to every Israelite, for all did not believe in God and walk before him. To all who walked in Abraham's ways God was their infinite portion.

How long did this covenant established with Abraham last?

It is still in force, for it is eternal, and has been

perpetuated even to our day with all believers and their children.

There have been, however, different dispensations of this covenant, that is, the same mode of the administration of the covenant favors has not always been followed.

There have been really three dispensations of the covenant blessings during the Old Testament:

1. The first extending from Adam to Abraham.

During this period there was no formal covenant, no sacrament, no one special people to whom the covenant favors were confined.

2. The second extending from Abraham to Moses.

During this period there was a sacrament, circumcision; the revelation of God's grace was greatly increased and the covenant formally made with Abraham and his seed.

3. The third dispensation extended from Moses to Christ.

The covenant was now a national covenant, limited to Israel as a people or nation. During this period there were two sacraments, circumcision and passover. And another great distinction of this period was that God revealed and maintained his laws given to Moses at Mt. Sinai.

The moral law of the ten commandments was given as the rule of life, and besides this law there were numerous ordinances for the ceremonies of religion.

A priesthood and system of sacrifices were introduced, and a more definite view was given of the salvation of the Lord for his people.

This dispensation was full of types, all pointing to Christ, all promising some form of grace which the

Messiah would gain for his Church. The Church was yet in the age of its minority, and so God spoke to it through picturesque symbols and types. This especially was the period of preparation and anticipation of Christ, who was ever more clearly revealed and promised by the prophets.

Most of the people lost sight of the true spiritual and typical meaning of the various ordinances of this period, they failed to see that the ceremonies of their religion were intended to lead their faith to Christ, and they imagined the observance of the outward duties of religion were sufficient to make them acceptable and pleasing in God's sight. Some, however, perceived the true intention of God and were saved by faith in Christ, even as we are today.

Under what dispensation of the covenant of grace are we living?

Under the gospel dispensation.

The peculiarity of this dispensation is:

1. It is catholic, i.e., it is not confined to one people, but designed for all nations and all classes of men.

2. It is more spiritual than the old dispensation. The types and ceremonies are done away, because fulfilled in Christ, and the revelation of God's grace is more direct, more inward and spiritual. Christ has come and has sent the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, to abide in the people of God and guide them in sanctification of life.

3. This dispensation is more evangelical. The old dispensation was more legal.

4. This dispensation is final, the old was temporary and preparatory.

At the end of this period comes the resurrection and the judgment. All the remaining saints of God will be

converted and gathered home to God in this dispensation.

What evidence have we that it is one and the same covenant of grace during all these various dispensations?

1. Because the same blessings of salvation and eternal life were given to the saints of God under the Old Testament as under the New.

The saints of old knew of pardon of sin, restoration into the favor of God, the renewing of life and hope of eternal life. Compare Gen. 17:7 and II Cor. 6:16. The same blessings mean the same covenant.

2. Because Christ is the Mediator under both dispensations.

The believers of old were saved by virtue of the sacrifice of Christ, yet to be made, and we are saved by his sacrifice already made.

All trust of God's people has ever been in him who was revealed as the Seed of the Woman, the Seed of Abraham, Shiloh, the Son of David, the Servant of the Lord, the Prince of Peace, and God manifest in the flesh.

Acts 4:12: "And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved."

3. Because in every age faith has been the necessary condition of salvation.

Rom. 4:3: "For what saith the Scripture? And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness."

Rom. 5:1: "Being therefore justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

There have been different modes of administration of the blessings of the covenant, but it was ever the same covenant.

With whom is the covenant of grace made?

This question is the same as to ask: who are the parties to the covenant?

In all covenants there must necessarily be two parties. Among Reformed teachers there has always been a diversity of opinion as to who the parties to the covenant are. There are especially two ideas:

1. Some teach that the covenant was made in all eternity between the Father and the Son as contracting parties, the Son therein acting as the second Adam, representing all his people as their Mediator, Surety and Head, assuming their place and undertaking all their obligations, and engaging to apply to them all the benefits of salvation, and to secure on their part the performance of all the duties required. According to this view the covenant was contracted with the head for the salvation of the members. Christ was the Sponsor for his people and in him the members of his body covenanted with the Father. The Westminster Larger Catechism presents this view. In answer to the question, "With whom was the covenant of grace made?" it is said: "The covenant of grace was made with Christ as the second Adam, and in Him with all the elect as his seed."

2. Others believe that there are really two covenants, the first called, the *Covenant of Redemption*, formed from eternity between the Father and the Son as parties. The second, called the *Covenant of Grace*, formed between God and his people. The latter, the covenant of grace, is founded on the former, the covenant of redemption.

There is no doctrinal difference between those who advocate either of these two views, the difference being mostly in the manner of viewing God's dealings with his people and of stating these views.

Those who teach an eternal covenant of grace between the Father and Son, according to which the Son not only makes possible the salvation of his people by his obedience, but also actually carries out every part of salvation in the restoration of his people, lay very proper stress: (1) on the unity existing between Christ and his people according to the eternal purpose of God; (2) on the similarity between the covenant of works and of grace,—in the first Adam representing the whole human race in the economy of nature, in the second Christ representing the whole body of his people in the economy of grace. Rom. 5: 19: "For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous."

(3) On the fact that all salvation is the work of the triune God, and that man is in reality not a party to the covenant with God except that Christ has made him a new creature through the Holy Spirit, and even after we are saved our living in covenant relation with the Lord is ever through Christ our head, for whose sake we are accepted.

There is, therefore, much in favor of this view in the Scripture and in actual experience.

We would, however, prefer the second view presented above, which distinguishes between two covenants: *the covenant of redemption* between the Father and the Son for the salvation of the elect, and *the covenant of grace* between God and his people, of which covenant of grace Christ is mediator and surety. This view can embrace the truth included in the view of an eternal covenant of grace and also comprehend other essential truths of Scripture which teach that God actually covenants with his people.

Scripture plainly teaches two covenants, the first between the Father and the Son, and the second between God and his people, and that there is a difference between these two, difference in condition and promises; and that the covenant between God and his people has been made possible by the eternal covenant between God the Father and the Son for the redemption of the elect. We will describe these two covenants and point out their relation to each other.

What is the covenant of redemption?

The Covenant of Redemption is the eternal agreement between the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, whereby the Father has given the Son to be the Redeemer and Head of the elect and the Son has pledged himself to be the Surety and Savior of his people through the work of the Holy Spirit. This covenant of redemption is also called the Counsel of Peace.

The work of saving the people of God is a work of the triune God, each one of the three Persons is interested in it, and together they have covenanted to redeem and save the eternally beloved. No man has been the adviser of God in devising the plan of salvation, but here as everywhere, all things are out of, through and unto God. And in no other revelation of God is there given to us such a beautiful manifestation of the co-operation of the three Persons of the Trinity as is made known to us in the revelation of the counsel of peace or covenant of redemption. Perfect harmony and perfect unanimity is manifested between the Father and the Son in agreeing to save the objects of their love.

The proof of this doctrine is found in the Scripture where it speaks of contracting parties, promises and conditions, when it reveals to us the relation of the Father and the Son in their work of salvation. The Son

becomes as Mediator the Servant of the Father, to him a work is given, and promises of reward are mentioned when this work is accomplished.

John 17: 4: "I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do." Compare John 20: 17; Isaiah 49; 53: 10; John 17: 14, 24.

What conditions did the Father put to the Son in the covenant of redemption?

1. That he should assume the human nature and thus become one with those he was to save.

2. That he should by his obedience in suffering and death atone for the sins of his people, and should furthermore by fulfilling the requirements of the law merit for them eternal life.

3. That he should also apply the blessings of salvation to all his people and cause them to live in covenant relation with their God.

What promises did the Father make unto the Son?

1. That he would prepare him a human nature and anoint this human nature with the Holy Spirit to qualify it for the work of redemption.

2. That he would be exalted after his humiliation, and that to him would be given the Holy Spirit without measure to regenerate and save his people.

These conditions and promises we know have been fulfilled, and so the eternal covenant between the Father and the Son results in the redemption of the Church of God. Because this covenant of redemption is carried out God can and does now make a covenant of grace with his people.

Wherein does the covenant of grace differ from the covenant of redemption?

1. In the contracting parties: in the one, the parties are God and his people, in the other the Father and Son.

2. In the conditions: the covenant of redemption included conditions for Christ to fulfill, viz., that he must suffer for his people and gain eternal life for them; the covenant of grace includes the condition of conversion from sin and faith in Christ for all who would enjoy the blessing of eternal life.

3. The covenant of redemption aimed at the securing of salvation; the covenant of grace aims at the application of salvation to believers.

4. The covenant of redemption is eternal; the covenant of grace is temporal, it is based on the former, but carried out in the course of time.

Why is the covenant God makes with us called the covenant of grace?

Because it is entirely of grace, the whole arrangement and every blessing we obtain according to this covenant is all of grace. The sovereign love of God is the exclusive origin and source of the covenant. In contrast to the covenant of works, wherein man had to gain eternal life by his own obedience to the law, the present covenant arrangement secures eternal life to man without works simply as the gift of God. God gives Christ, who removes the curse from us by being made a curse for us, who grants eternal life as a gift to his people. Even faith in its first aspiration to the Savior is of grace. All that man does in agreeing to the terms of salvation and in serving God is of God.

For Christ there was no grace, he had to suffer the penalty of death for his people and to fulfill the law that he might earn life for us.

Now as a fruit of his work we are restored into the favor of God through infinite grace. The covenant is

often rightly called a testament because all it contains is the sovereign disposition of God's will.

Because this covenant is so entirely a gift of grace it is eternal, it cannot fail. The covenant of works depended on the obedience of a fallible man and was broken, but the covenant of grace rests on the accomplished work of Christ, and does not depend on the constancy and loyalty of man, it is entirely of grace. Man is untrue to his obligation every day, but God has decreed to save his people and in grace remains true to them. Of God, and through God, and unto God is every part of the covenant of grace.

Who are today to be considered members of the covenant of grace?

This very practical question has been differently answered. Some would limit the covenant people to the elect alone, while others teach that the believers and their children are to be considered the covenant people. The significance of this question we will all feel when we consider that our answer to it will determine our attitude towards the children of believers and of the youths who have grown up in the church, but have not yet shown any signs of conversion.

Are such outside the covenant of grace? We doubt whether this can be maintained from the Scriptures. It is true the full spiritual blessings of the covenant are only given to the elect, and they only actively and heartily enter into the covenant relation. In them the covenant ideal is realized. For them it is not merely an outward relation, but an inner engagement with the Lord, and for them the covenant is inviolable and eternal. Through the new birth they are inseparably connected with Jesus Christ, the Head of the covenant.

On the other hand, however, is the clear teaching of

Scripture that God establishes the covenant with the believers and their children, and that the covenant is perpetuated from generation to generation through the families of believers. Believers and their families are spoken of in Scripture as being the covenant people, thus Abraham and his house were in covenant relation with the Lord, and God ever treated Israel under the Old Testament dispensation as his people, not only the elect, but all the seed of Abraham, and to the unfaithful Jews he announced his punishment as upon those who had broken the covenant. Hosea 6.

They must have been in the covenant before they could break it. In the New Testament likewise we read the assurance "the promise is to you and to your children," Acts 2: 39, and we are told that the apostles considered the children to have entered into covenant relation towards the Lord with their parents, when these believed,—therefore, the apostles baptized the parents and their children. Acts 16: 15, 33. I Cor. 7: 14.

There can be, therefore, no doubt but what the children of believers are within the circle of the covenant. Are they all, however, even those who are not converted to the Lord, in the same sense within the Covenant? Do all stand in the same relation to God? This can not be, and is plainly proven not to be so. There must be consequently a two-fold relation to God within the covenant,—one relation wherein those stand who have believed in Christ and surrendered heart and hand to God, and another relation wherein those stand who are still unconverted but have been born of parents to whom the Lord has said: "I am thy God and the God of thy children."

This two-fold relation has been recognized by many of our theologians, and various terms have been used

to describe the different relation wherein the believers and those who are not yet believers stand to the covenant God, a very common way of distinguishing being to speak of an outward and an inward relation or side of the covenant of grace. The covenant is said to have two sides: an outward and an inward: they who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ stand in an inner relation toward the covenant God and with them the covenant is eternal, while those who do not believe are not yet inwardly related to God, and if not turned to God will eventually drop out of the circle of the covenant.

Some Reformed teachers, referring to the same thing as we call the outward and inward side of the covenant of grace, have preferred to use the terms judicial relation and vital or living fellowship. They who are born again and are thus through the Holy Spirit in fellowship with Christ are in the inner relation or the vital union with the covenant Head; others not born again and living without faith are in the judicial relation, that is according to God's law and justice they are in the circle of the covenant and thus judicially have a claim on the promise of God and God has a claim on them as his people. (See doctrine of Infant Baptism.)

Others have spoken of an outward and inward covenant, as though there were two covenants, but there is no statement in Scripture on which to base such an idea; the Bible knows of but one covenant of grace.

We must distinguish not two covenants, but a two-fold relation towards God and towards the covenant blessings and obligations.

That the meaning of the covenant for us may be appreciated, a little more detailed account of this two-fold relation toward God will be beneficial.

And then let it first of all be remembered that there are two ways of coming into covenant relation with the Lord;—the first is by a living faith in Christ, when one before outside becomes a partaker of the blessings of salvation and surrenders his life to the Lord for service;—the second way is by being born in the covenant. Those who were outside of the covenant of grace, but come to faith in Christ, do by this faith enter into the full life and fellowship with God which the covenant of grace grants to believers, they are not only in outward relation to God and his people, but also in living union with both.

It is different, however, with children born of believers, they are in the covenant by birth. Not by their own choice, but by the choice of God are they in the covenant. God caused them to be born of covenant people, in a covenant home, and God claims these children as his own; he assures them the full blessings of the covenant; viz., that he will be their God, he demands of them forsaking of the world and living unto him in obedience, and he invites not only but promises and commands faith in Christ as the means of securing all the privileges of grace. Such children of believers do not, therefore, stand in the same relation to God as the children of heathen do, for God makes no special and personal promises to these and to them he does not say: "I am your God," but he does say this to the children of the saints. These children have special privileges and obligations, and if they do not live up to their privileges and duties their responsibilities and condemnation will be greater than that of the heathen, for they are covenant breakers.

Children of believers are within the covenant of grace by the will of God. The children have done noth-

ing on their part to enter the covenant, and yet there is a valid covenant relation, for God has established this.

As children born of citizens are citizens of the United States, not by their own choice, but by the law of the land, so are children of believers in covenant relation with the Lord. But they are not immediately in full possession of the covenant blessings and do not all live in a new and holy life to the glory of God. They are, nevertheless, in the circle of the covenant, God claims them as his own, and in turn promises to be their God and Father through Jesus Christ. There is a judicial or legal relation between God and the children of the covenant. God has a legal claim on their trust and love, and they have a legal claim on God. As soon as they turn to God in hearty surrender of life they will know that God is ever true to his part of the covenant. No child of the covenant that has grown to years of discretion ought to be content to remain apart from God and his salvation, none should rest till they know they have entered into a living fellowship with Jesus Christ and are enjoying the full benefits of his salvation.

But how can the child of the covenant come to enjoy this, how can he consciously enter into the blessings of Christ? This he does in his conversion; he then forsakes the way of sin and turns to Christ in living faith, and all who believe in Christ and submit to him as Master are partakers of the covenant blessings. When one learns to acknowledge the claim that God has upon him, and also exercises his own claim on God by asking God to accept him and save him for Christ's sake, he then agrees to the covenant and consciously partakes of the fellowship of Christ. In repentance for sin, in sorrow for having lived contrary to God, he flees to the

Savior to be saved by free grace. He has been born in the covenant, baptized in the name of the triune God, whereby God assured him he would be his Father, Savior and Sanctifier, he has been favored with the labor of the church of God, has been wrought upon in many ways by the Spirit of God,—all of which he by the grace of God appreciates and to which he responds by surrendering to Christ, and when he does this God gives him peace and rest as the evidence that he has been justified for Christ's sake.

The objection is often made:

“Man can not do this in his own power, he can not repent and believe, can not enter into covenant relation with God from his own choice, and so he will have to wait till God causes him to believe and turn.” To this we of course fully agree, man does not turn to God in his own power, salvation is entirely of grace, and only by the regenerating of the Holy Spirit does man enter into living fellowship with Jesus Christ. But do not forget that the grace of the Holy Spirit that is needed to believe and be saved is just what God has promised to those in the covenant. What is needed is a gift of God—a gift promised to the children of the covenant and church of God. “Ask and it shall be given, seek and you shall find, knock and it shall be opened.” Too many lay emphasis on the fact that they can do nothing, and then make this an excuse for going on in an impenitent life. Let them remember God has pledged himself to bless his covenant people. Let man do as God directs, trusting in the love and faithfulness of God, and there will be no unfaithfulness on God's part. The child of the covenant has special obligations and duties, but he has also special promises. Claim what God has assured

you and you can fulfill your obligations. God does not expect anyone to come and to continue in his own power. In the beginning of our turning to God and ever thereafter we live by faith in Christ.

It is very wrong when the covenant youth grows up and, in spite of all its privileges, shows no fear of God, and confesses no hearty faith in Christ. Many are content to remain forever so-called baptized members of the church and manifest no sense of need of heart to get right with God. This is deplorable. Let such appreciate that God not only invites them to be saved, but expects them to turn from their evil ways and live through Christ. Again let us remember confession of faith before the church is not in itself enough. One may be a communicant member of the church and not be a member of Christ. We must all become so-called full members of the church, but this position will be of no advantage if we are not members of the spiritual body of Christ. We must get right with Christ, and we will rejoice to be right with the church.

May Christ never have to lament over us as he did over Jerusalem. Matt. 23: 37.

Through what means does God administer and perpetuate his covenant?

Through his word and Spirit. The ministry of the word calls to repentance and faith and to continued obedience to God, but this ministry of the word is ineffective except the Holy Spirit apply it to our hearts. The word calls to duty, the Spirit fits for duty. Thus by word and Spirit, we are enabled to be true to our part of the covenant. Study, therefore, God's word and yield to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. Grieve not the Spirit. Resist not the Spirit.

Of what use are the Sacraments in the covenant of grace?

They are means instituted by God to confirm the promises of the covenant of grace and to strengthen the faith that accepts it.

(See doctrine of Sacraments.)

Do all Christians accept our view of the covenant of grace?

No, this is a doctrine peculiar to churches of Calvinistic creed, mainly the Reformed and Presbyterian churches, and in these it is not always as emphasized and influential in practical life as it should be. The more a church loves the Reformed confession of faith and the more it lives in harmony with this confession the more will the covenant of grace be emphasized. Laxity in doctrine and in practical Christian life means a losing of sympathy with this beautiful scriptural conception of the relation of God to his people.

What will be the grand results of a consistent application of the doctrine of the covenant of grace to Christian life?

God will be praised as the Author and Finisher of our salvation. His sovereign grace will be recognized as the source of all spiritual blessings. He sought man in his sins, he gave man his own Son as Savior, through this Son man has obtained the blessings of salvation, and through this Son God covenants with man to be his God unto eternal life. A recognition of this fact will lead to a devoted life to God in everything. The believer who appreciates what this means will in his home, his church, the State and in social life, seek to live as becomes a partner with God. Especially in the training of children will this doctrine be most influential. The believing parent will appreciate that his child is to be treated as

a child of God, and he will seek to bring up his child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. He will pray for his child and with his child that it may enjoy with him the covenant blessings which God has promised. In the home there will be a Christian atmosphere, and the parent will seek to secure a Christian training through the agency of the church and school. When presenting their children to be baptized the parents are asked: "Do you promise and intend to see these children, when come to years of discretion, instructed and brought up in the aforesaid doctrine (the doctrine of Old and New Testament and of the articles of the confession of the Reformed Church), or help or cause them to be instructed therein, to the utmost of your power?" To which they answer: "yes."

This answer is not soon forgotten by sincere Christian parents, but in harmony with this promise they seek to the utmost of their power to lead their children in the way of their covenant God. And through their children God usually perpetuates his covenant and church.

Gen. 18: 19: "For I have known him, to the end that he may command his children and his household after him that they may keep the way of Jehovah, to do righteousness and justice; to the end that Jehovah may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him."

CHAPTER IV

THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST, THE MEDIATOR OF THE COVENANT OF GRACE

What position does Christ occupy in the covenant of grace?

He is Mediator and Surety of the covenant of grace.

In our treatment of the covenant of grace we have seen that it is God's way of restoring the proper relation between himself and the fallen sinner, so that the Lord becomes the God and Father of the sinner and the sinner becomes the child and heir of God.

To appreciate what it means that the proper relation between God and man is restored, let us remind ourselves that man is by nature guilty before his God, that he is vile and miserable in his sins before the eyes of God, that he is unwilling and unable to return to God and to serve him. In contrast with and over against this fallen sinner is the holy and righteous God, whose very nature must punish the sinner in his sinfulness. There is, therefore, between man and his God an immense separation and alienation. How can they come together? The sinner can not live in the love of God, except he first satisfy the demands of God against him on account of his guilt, and if God deals with the sinner as he is in himself, he can only reject him as a worker of iniquity, as vile and wretched, and thus unfit for the holy presence and intimacy of God. If the proper relation

between God and man is, therefore, ever to be restored it will be necessary that some person satisfy the demands of God and then so change and fit man that he is willing and able to commune again with his God. This Person the love and wisdom of God has provided in Jesus Christ, through whom God comes to man and through whom he restores his people to himself. Because of the position Jesus occupies between God and his people he is called the Mediator and Surety of the covenant of grace.

The word mediator is used in a three-fold sense:

First—In the sense of a messenger, who explains and performs the will of one party towards another, e.g., Moses was Mediator or messenger of God towards Israel and of Israel towards God. Gal. 3: 19.

Second—In the sense of advocate or intercessor, who pleads the cause of the offending party before the offended party. Thus Joab was mediator for Absalom before David.

Third—In the sense of efficient peace-maker. Such a mediator reconciles the demands of the offended party towards the offending party. Such a Mediator is Christ. He satisfies the demands of the justice of God for the sinner, and having atoned for sin and earned eternal life for his people he restores these people to God. Because Christ thus satisfies the demands of God he is also called Surety. As a Surety or Bondsman he has assumed all the obligations of his people and has discharged these in the stead of his people by his obedience to God.

Wherein must the Mediator be known?

In his *natures, names, offices and states.*

A study of these four subjects will give a most systematic view of our Mediator, Jesus Christ.

THE NATURES OF CHRIST

How many natures has Christ?

Two, a divine and a human nature.

In Christ there is but one Person, the Son of God.

This one Person has two natures; a divine nature, because he is God; a human nature, because he has assumed soul and body in his incarnation.

What Bible passages speak the plainest of Christ's divine nature?

Such texts as speak of him as God, the Son of God, etc.

Isa. 9: 6: "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

Matt. 1: 23: "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which, being interpreted is, God with us."

John 3: 16: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son."

John 20: 28: "Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God." Mark 5: 6. I Cor. 15: 47.

(For more proofs, see the doctrine of the Trinity.)

Why must our mediator be God?

He must be God that, by the power of his Godhead, he might bear in his human nature the burden of God's wrath and so obtain for and restore to us righteousness and life.

Notice that in this answer there are three reasons given why our Mediator must be God: (1) that by his Godhead he might bear the burden of God's wrath in his

human nature, e.g., the divine had to sustain the human; (2) that he might obtain for us righteousness and life,—only God could purchase righteousness and life for millions of wretched sinners, a human nature alone could impossibly do this; (3) that he might restore to us righteousness and life, not only obtain, but also restore, apply to us, put into our possession. We are dead through trespasses and sins, and if left to ourselves we could not take ourselves righteousness and life, even though these were obtained for and offered to us. Only God can put new life into a dead sinner, and rescue him from Satan's power.

Why must our Mediator be a real man?

Because the justice of God requires that the same human nature which has sinned should make satisfaction for sin.

Our nature has sinned, not that of an animal or any other creature, therefore, our nature must bear the punishment of sin; justice requires this. Under the Old Testament, animals were sacrificed as sin offerings for man; they were not, however, equivalent substitutes for man; as they are far inferior in value to any human being. In themselves all the animals had no value to atone for sin, but as types of Christ and as pledges of sincere penitence, they were accepted by God, and to the penitent who sacrificed in faith restoration into God's favor was granted for the sake of Christ's coming sacrifice.

In looking about for deliverance remember that our nature must satisfy the just demands of God. And our mediator must have our true nature, a soul like ours, and a body of our flesh and blood.

The following summary will give in brief, the reasons why our Mediator must be man:

1. The same nature that has sinned must satisfy for sin.

Our Mediator must take our position in law and redeem us from the curse of the law.

Gal. 4: 4, 5: "God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law that he might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

2. He must be a man that he might be able to suffer and die. God can not suffer and die, but a human nature can.

Heb. 2: 14: "Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death he might bring to naught him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

3. He must be man and in our state and condition, that he might be our great sympathetic High Priest.

Heb. 2: 17: "Wherefore it behooved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren, that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people; for in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted."

Why must our Mediator be a righteous man?

No one, being himself a sinner, could satisfy for others, an unrighteous man would first have to satisfy for himself before he could begin to do anything for others, and to remove his own guilt is forever impossible for any sinner.

What proofs have we that Jesus has a real human nature?

I Tim. 2: 5: "For there is one God, one Mediator also between God and man, *himself man*, Christ Jesus."

Scripture speaks of his soul and body, which together constitute human nature.

Matt. 26: 38: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death."

I Pet. 2: 24: "Who his own self bare our sins in his body upon the tree."

His experiences among men also show that he was man: he suffered, he rejoiced in spirit, he loved, he wept, he was angry, he formed friendships, he was tempted, he was like us in every respect, sin excepted.

This is a glorious fact for us, a miracle of God's condescending love.

But let us remember that the humanity of Christ is of little worth to us if he were only a man, for then Christianity were only a system of philosophy, or a system of hero-worship.

Alas, that so many see in Christ only an ideal man, a great human reformer. These do not know the mystery of godliness, that God was manifest in the flesh.

What can we say as to the relations between the two natures of Christ?

Christ's two natures exist *without mixture, without change, without division, and without separation*. (Creed of Chalcedon, A. D. 451.) After a bitter struggle between various parties as to the natures of Christ the above was finally agreed on by the Church, and is yet the confession of the Roman Catholic, Greek and Protestant Churches.

Can we comprehend the union of the two natures in Christ?

No, even much less than we can comprehend the union of soul and body in ourselves. We know there are in our Savior two natures and that each nature has its peculiar attributes, as God he is omnipotent, omni-

present, omniscient, etc., and as man he is limited in power and knowledge, etc. Both natures co-exist in Christ, and both are controlled by his divine personality.

Are there two persons in Christ: a human and a divine?

No, only one divine person, the Son of God. If there were two persons we would have two Saviors, a divine and a human Savior.

The Son of God acts through his two natures, so whatever is done by the divine or human nature of Christ is attributed to his Person. The human nature suffers and dies, but this is done by the Son of God in his human nature and, therefore, has the value of the infinite Person of Christ.

In our adoration we worship Christ in his two natures, but the ground of our worship is the divine Person of Christ. To worship the human nature of Christ independent of his divine Person would be idolatry; Christ since his incarnation always exists as God and man, we in our worship therefore adore him in both natures, which are inseparably united under his divine personality.

In this connection it is well to describe what we mean by a person.

A person is a being having life, intelligence, will and a separate individual existence. According to this definition God, angels and men are persons. In us our soul and body together constitute our personality. But Christ's soul and body did not constitute a human person because his soul and body never had a separate existence. From their very first origin his soul and body existed in personal union with the second Person of the Godhead. Had his soul and body existed independent of the Person of the Son of God then they would have

constituted a human person, but this was never the case; the eternal Person of the Son of God joined unto himself a human soul and body, which did constitute in him a human nature in union with his divine nature, but not a human personality.

What is the effect upon Christ's human nature of the union of the two natures in Christ?

1. Exaltation of all human excellencies above the standard of human and creaturely nature, a superior gift of wisdom and power and love, etc., was the privilege of the human nature because of its union with the divine.

2. Exaltation of the human nature to unparalleled dignity and glory.

Has Christ still a human nature?

Yes, but glorified. His human nature is no longer subject to the suffering and punishment of sin. Since his resurrection and ascension death no longer rules over him. His human nature is now what ours will be, if we arise unto life and glory.

Did Christ bring his human nature from Heaven?

No, but he took it on him of the Virgin Mary, by the operation of the Holy Ghost, and is now become like unto his brethren in all things, sin excepted (Heb. 2: 14; 4: 15.)

That Christ had brought his human nature from heaven was the heresy of the old Anabaptists. They believed that our nature was so deeply sunken that nothing good could be brought forth from it, not even by the almighty power of God, and that Christ's human nature was not part of our nature, but an entirely new creature from heaven.

But this view is entirely unbiblical. Christ is the Son of Man, the seed of the woman, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, of the house of David.

He has our nature, to bear the sins of this nature. Having our nature he can also thoroughly sympathize with us.

Heb. 4: 15: "For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

Is his Godhead then changed into humanity?

No, for his Godhead is unchangeable.

How is he then become man?

By assuming the human nature into a personal union with the divine.

In his incarnation Jesus remained who he was: the eternal Son of God, but he took to himself what he before did not have: a human nature, and ever since these two natures have existed inseparably in Christ; even in the death of his human nature they were not parted.

In assuming the human nature Jesus was not passive but active, he himself assuming our nature. The Son of God was not unconscious or involuntary when he took to himself our nature, but willingly and lovingly did he humble himself to our state and condition. Paul writes to the Philippians that Christ Jesus emptied himself, that is, he laid aside his heavenly glory and taking the form of a servant, he was made in the likeness of man. Philippians 2: 7.

The human nature of Christ was pre-eminently the product of the work of the Holy Spirit. In the conception and birth of every human being the Holy Spirit is active, for he is the Author of all life, but the producing of the soul and body of Jesus was extraordinary and immediate.

Because of this wonderful conception of the Holy

Spirit, Jesus was without sin, he had no original sin, and therefore no tendency to actual sin.

Jesus was free from sin, not because Mother Mary was holy, but because the Holy Spirit was the Father of his human nature, and he was ever filled with the Holy Spirit. His human nature was therefore holy and righteous; but let us well remember that the principal reason why Jesus never did or never could sin was because he was God, the second person of the Trinity. Jesus as man could be tempted and was tempted, but he could never yield to temptation, for his Person was divine. God can not sin.

Which have been the principal heresies in regard to the natures of Christ?

1. The idea that Jesus was a mere man: held by Ebionites and Alogi, later by the Socinians, Rationalists and Unitarians.

2. The idea that denied Christ's true humanity.

The Docetae held that Christ's body was only a phantom or vision.

The Apollinarians held that the divine nature took the place of the reasonable soul in Christ. Christ had therefore not a human soul as we have.

3. The idea that the two natures are so distinct and separate in Christ that the fact of the unity of the two natures in the Person of Christ is lost sight of; held by the Nestorians.

4. The idea that confounds the two natures and holds that Christ possessed but one nature, resulting from the mixture of divinity with humanity: held by the Monophysites.

What is the peculiar view of the Lutherans in regard to the natures of Christ?

They hold that certain attributes of the divine nature

have been communicated to the human nature, especially omniscience, omnipresence, and the power of giving life.

Luther taught that the body of Christ was in, with and under the bread in the Lord's Supper. That this might be possible it was taught by the Lutherans that the attributes of omnipresence and omniscience had been given to the human nature.

What is our judgment of this Lutheran doctrine?

1. It is not taught in the Bible, but rests on the mistaken explanation of the expression: "This is my body." Luke 11:19.

2. The Scriptures sharply distinguish between the Creator and his creature, but by teaching that there are divine properties communicated to the human nature of Christ there results a mixture of Creator and creature.

3. If divine properties are given to the human nature it is no longer human.

When and where was Christ born?

In the fulness of time, in Bethlehem.

Cal. 4: 4: "But when the fulness of time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law."

The fulness of time was the time appointed by the Father, when all was ripe for the execution of his purpose.

The fulness of time was:

1. When sin was fully developed and men realized the enormity and deadly fruits of sin.

2. When man's inability to save himself by obedience to the law was completely manifested.

3. When God's providence had prepared the way for the Redeemer in the social, political and religious world.

4. When the prophets had said the Messiah would come.

It was predicted the Messiah should come before the sceptre departed from Judah (Gen. 19: 10); at the end of seventy weeks, that is weeks of years, or four hundred and ninety years, after the going forth of the command to rebuild Jerusalem (Dan. 9: 24-27); and while the second temple was still standing, Hag. 2: 19; Mal. 3: 1.

These prophecies as to time have been fulfilled in Christ Jesus.

How can we prove to the Jews that Christ is the true Messiah?

By showing that all the Bible foretold of the Messiah has been fulfilled in Christ and in him alone.

He was to be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2); of the tribe of Judah and family of David (Gen. 49: 10; Jer. 23: 5, 6); of a virgin (Isa. 7: 14); he was to be despised and rejected, a man of sorrows, suffering a vicarious death (Isa. 53); he was to enter the city riding upon an ass (Zech. 9: 9); he was to be sold for thirty pieces of silver (Zech. 11: 12, 13); his garments were to be parted (Ps. 22); he was to be pierced (Zech. 12: 19); he was to be a light for the Gentiles (Isa. 42: 6; 49: 6).

To what should the doctrine of Christ's incarnation and natures lead us?

To admire this great mystery of godliness and to seek our all in Christ.

I John 5: 1: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God."

Because Christ so exactly meets every requirement necessary in the Mediator between God and man we will appreciate the words of Peter, Acts 4: 12: "And in none other is there salvation; for neither is there any other

name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved."

There is, however, in certain circles a tendency to seek the mediation of angels and saints. To meet those who trust in such mediation, we will give our reasons why we look away from them to trust only in Christ Jesus.

Could not the angels be our mediators?

No, for they are neither God nor man.

The necessity of a Mediator who is both God and man has been pointed out in the foregoing. As the angels are neither, they can not serve as mediators.

The angels are certainly deeply interested in our salvation; Jesus declared there is joy among the angels because of a sinner that is converted, and they are ready messengers of God for the service of the saints on earth, but they can never save us, because they can not fulfill the requirements of God against sinners. We may never worship the angels.

Heb. 1: 14: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation?"

(More about the angels will be found under the head of Creation.)

Cannot the saints be our mediators?

No, for they themselves have sinned, and have obtained salvation by no other means than through this Mediator.

The Roman Catholics invoke the help of deceased saints in their behalf, especially those canonized by the popes. They call on Mother Mary, the Apostles and others. They believe some saints had a superabundance of good works and that their surplus can be made to

benefit the sinners on earth; also that the saints can intercede for us with God.

In contrast to this, we believe that no saint ever had a surplus of any goodness or work, that even the best are saved through grace alone, and that the merits of Christ alone are sufficient and the only ground of hope and salvation. Furthermore there is no connection or communication between us and deceased saints, they can not hear us and are not able to know our needs, that they should pray for us.

It is well to acquaint ourselves with the lives of the saints, there will often be many instructive and encouraging facts found in their history for our present lives, but let us never seek our salvation with them. Jesus is our complete Savior.

Isaiah 63:16: "For thou art our Father, though Abraham knoweth us not, and Israel doth not acknowledge us."

(See Confession of Faith, Art. 26.)

THE NAMES OF CHRIST

Which are the principal names of our Mediator?

The names Jesus and Christ.

He is also called the Son of David, the Son of Man, Immanuel, Prince of Peace, the Lion of Judah, the Lamb of God, the good Shepherd, the true Vine, the Sun of righteousness, the Star of Jacob, Lord, Master, etc.

Each of these names is worthy of meditation. They reveal something of Christ.

Why is he called Jesus, that is Savior?

Because he saves his people from their sins.

The name Jesus received by divine command; an angel said to Mary and to Joseph: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus." Matt. 1:21.

What does it mean to save?

To deliver from the greatest evil and make partaker of the highest good.

The greatest evil is sin, with its guilt, its corruption and its punishment.

The highest good is reconciliation with God and eternal life in his presence.

The name Jesus is the English equivalent for the Hebrew Joshua.

Joshua is a contraction of the two words Jehovah and Hoshea, that is the Lord is Helper or Deliverer.

Our Savior's name as Jesus therefore emphasizes the fact that it is the Lord who saves. Jesus is Jehovah our Salvation. Our deliverance is God's work.

Why is he called Christ, that is anointed?

Because he was anointed with the Holy Ghost and ordained by God the Father to be our Chief Prophet, our only High Priest, and our eternal King.

Christ means the anointed, its Hebrew equivalent being Messiah.

John 1: 41: "We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, Christ."

Christ is our Savior's official name, and refers to his three offices.

THE OFFICES OF CHRIST

What is meant by the fact that Christ was anointed?

There are two things meant by this:

1. That he was appointed to three offices.
2. That he was qualified to fill these three offices.

During the Old Testament dispensation many of the prophets, priests and kings were anointed with holy oil. Whenever this was done they were thus designated to their respective offices, and the oil was also a symbol

of the gifts of the Holy Spirit fitting the appointed official for his official calling.

See history of Saul, David, Hazael, Elisha, Aaron and his sons.

The prophets, priests and kings under Israel were types of Christ, and what the anointing means for them it also meant for Christ. He alone truly filled the three offices of Prophet, Priest and King.

When was Christ anointed?

He was appointed from eternity by the Father, but qualified according to his human nature by the Holy Spirit during his mission on earth.

According to which nature was Christ anointed?

He was ordained according to both natures, but qualified according to his human nature. The divine nature could receive no qualification, for it is infinitely perfect in itself. The human nature needed to be qualified with the gifts of wisdom, power, love, etc., that it might be fit to cooperate with the divine nature in the mediatorial work.

The qualification of the human nature occurred from the beginning of his incarnation, but especially at his baptism. Matt. 3: 16, 17.

Acts 10: 38: "Even Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Ghost and with power."

Can the work of Christ in either office ever be separated by itself?

No, the work of the three offices can be distinguished, but in its exercise neither office is ever separated from the other two.

When Christ teaches as Prophet he is essentially a royal and priestly teacher, and when he rules he is a priestly and prophetic King, and when he as Priest

atones or intercedes he is a prophetic and kingly Priest. Every office qualifies the other in every act.

Some have spoken of Christ's three-fold office, thereby to emphasize that Christ has really but one office, that all his work is one, is a whole.

What is the work of Christ in his first office, that of Prophet?

To enlighten and instruct us by his Spirit and Word.

What was the work of the prophets of the Old Testament day?

To reveal the will of God to the people; they were the teachers of God's revelation to others. Sometimes this revelation concerned future things and then the prophet predicted what was to come. But the prediction of future events was only part of their work.

In general a prophet of God is one authorized and qualified to speak for God to men. He is given an insight into God's counsel and sent to proclaim the truth to others. This was particularly true of Christ.

Over against the falsehood and deception in the world through sin Christ reveals the truth of God, therefore he is the Light of the world.

The necessity of Christ as Prophet will appear to us when we remember that without knowledge of God and his will there is no salvation possible for us, and all spiritual knowledge comes to us from Christ our Prophet. Christ would not be our Priest and King, if he were not also our Prophet.

When has Christ exercised his prophetic office?

1. Before his incarnation from the days of Paradise.
2. During his incarnation in his ministry on earth.
3. Since his incarnation.

Before his incarnation Christ revealed to men the will of God in various ways, through direct communica-

tion, visions, dreams, and through his inspired prophets, also the inspiration of the Old Testament. I Pet. 1: 11.

Since his incarnation Christ speaks to us through his completed word and through the Holy Spirit, both externally and internally. When we speak of Christ speaking to us through his word we also refer to the ministry of the word through the officials of the church.

The ministers explaining God's word to us are doing Christ's work as a Prophet; through them Christ speaks.

Is Christ's teaching more effective than that of any other?

Yes, because he makes the truth he has taught us effectual through the Holy Spirit. In us there is no knowledge and love of the truth of God, but rather are we blind, ignorant and at enmity towards God and his revelation. If the teaching of the truth of God were left to man, it would only reach our ears and not our hearts, it would not settle in our conviction and become a controlling power in our lives. But the Holy Spirit enlightens and persuades the heart, causes us to know and love and obey the truth. The Spirit takes of Christ and declares unto us, he is sent by Christ to lead into all truth.

Because of the presence of the Holy Spirit we are confident that God's word will triumph in Christian and heathen lands.

John 16: 14: "He shall glorify me: for he shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you." Heb. 1: 1; John 1: 18; I Cor. 4: 1.

What is the work of Christ as our High Priest?

To sacrifice himself and to pray for us.

To restore the proper relation between God and man is the great purpose of Christ's mediatorial work. As Prophet he restores to man the lost knowledge of

God; as a Priest he is called and qualified to treat in behalf of man with God and to restore him to God. We can not treat with God directly, we are fallen sinners, condemned by God; for us, as we are in ourselves, the Lord is a consuming fire. We ought to be wholly consecrated to our God, but we are not and never will be, if left to ourselves. Our sins are a barrier between God and us, and because of our sins the justice of God demands our death.

If ever we are to be restored to God and to life eternal our Mediator must satisfy God's justice, and having atoned for our sins he must intercede for us that we may be restored by God into his favor and fellowship. To do this is the work of Christ as Priest; he sacrifices himself unto death to the justice of God for our sins, and then lives to intercede for us in heaven.

When did Christ fulfill his priestly office?

From the fall of man, and he continues this till the end of time.

He was from the beginning of sin in the world the intercessor for man, and because of the sacrifice he was to bring in the fulness of time the believers of the Old Testament day were saved. In the eternal counsel of peace between the Father and the Son for the salvation of God's people, it was guaranteed that the Son would sacrifice himself, and as this was unchangeably decreed, the merits of Christ's suffering and death were already given to the saints of old in anticipation of Christ's accomplished work.

In what relation did the priests and sacrifices of the Old Testament dispensation stand toward Christ?

They were typical of Christ and his work, they were representatives and prophecies of Christ. The priests of the old day were appointed at Christ's command and

they were doing Christ's work. The sacrifices of the Old Testament in themselves would have been useless, for the death of an animal can never be a substitute for man's death, but as types of Christ they were effective for the reconciliation of God toward man.

The believer of the old dispensation looked beyond his sacrifice to the great Lamb of God, and through faith in him was saved.

What did Christ sacrifice?

Himself, that is his entire human nature. Christ was both Priest and sacrifice. Not only at the end of his life on Golgotha did he sacrifice himself, but his whole period of humiliation was a sacrifice, a consecration to God.

Heb. 10: 14: "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."

John 6: 38: "For I am come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him who sent me."

What words are used in Scripture to express this self-sacrifice of Christ?

The words satisfaction, reconciliation and atonement.

Satisfaction, accurately and adequately expresses what Christ did. He satisfied God's law in full. (a) He suffered the penalty of the law, that is death. (b) He rendered that obedience which was the condition of life. Thus as the second Adam he satisfied all the requirements of the broken covenant of works, as left by the first Adam. (See Covenant of Works.)

Reconciliation in general means to reunite and bring to friendship after estrangement, but in the biblical sense it means the legal satisfaction which is the ground of the reunion. Christ's sacrifice was the reconciliation of God, the ground of restoration of God's favor to us. Rom. 5: 10, 11; II Cor. 5: 19.

Atonement signifies the expiation of guilt by means

of the sacrificial death of Christ in order to propitiate God.

Other words are redemption, ransom, expiation, propitiation.

What was the motive of the satisfaction of Christ?

The unspeakable love of God. Christ's sacrifice was the effect and not the cause of God's love. John 3: 16.

What are the effects of Christ's sacrifice?

1. It expiated the guilt of sin, and reconciled God to us as a righteous Ruler and loving Father.

2. It satisfied God's justice and rendered the exercise of his love consistent with his righteousness.

3. It secured the salvation of those for whom Christ died.

4. It produces the most profound moral impression on God's people, melting the heart, and dissipating the fears of convicted sinners.

Was the purpose of the death of Christ that he might thereby win the good will of man towards God, that is reconcile man to God?

No, the main part of the atonement is that God was reconciled unto man.

The doctrine of the Universalists is that the death of Christ was intended to reconcile men to God, in contradiction to our doctrine that Christ died to reconcile God to men.

It is certainly true that as a result of the Holy Spirit's working in us we are delivered from our enmity towards God, and thus are reconciled to him and his will, but this would never have occurred had not Christ first satisfied God's justice, and thereby made it possible for the Holy Spirit to be given to us.

I Cor. 15: 3: "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures."

Eph. 5: 2: "And hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice unto God for a sweet smelling savor."

I Pet. 3: 18: "For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God."

I Pet. 2: 24; 1: 18; I John 4: 10; Rev. 5: 9; Heb. 9: 12-15.

Has Christ satisfied for his people only by suffering the punishment of sin for them or has he also fulfilled the demands of the law as a condition of life?

He has done both: in his passive obedience he has suffered the penalty of sin, in his active obedience he has fulfilled the law as a condition to eternal life. God declared the sinner must die, Christ died for his people. God declared: do that and thou shalt live, that is fulfill the law perfectly. Christ did fulfill the law, and thereby has gained eternal life for his people. In suffering the penalty of the law he was passive, therefore, passive obedience. In obeying the demands of the law he was active, therefore active obedience.

There was in Christ's life therefore a two-fold obedience. We must not, however, say that the active obedience was rendered in the first part of his life and the passive exclusively in the final suffering and death, but they were always contemporaneous, they went together in every hour of Jesus' earthly life.

Thus Christ has taken up the broken Covenant of Works where Adam left it, and he has fulfilled it, that he might give us life according to the covenant of grace.

For whom did Christ as High Priest sacrifice himself?

For his people, those chosen to eternal life. Christ did not die for the whole world. The atonement is particular and not general. As far as the value of Christ's

death is concerned it was sufficient for the whole world, for it had the value of the infinite Son of God, but it was intended only for those who will be saved.

The popular theory in this country at present is that Christ died for every individual, Christian and heathen alike, and that he thereby has secured the possibility of salvation for all on the terms of faith in him. To all common grace is given whereby they can believe, and now it is left to man's free will whether he will be saved or not. This is Arminianism.

Why do we believe that Christ had died only for his people?

1. Because we believe that the Scriptures teach that God has from eternity chosen certain persons to eternal life, and to all the means thereto. Christ's death was a means to carry this eternal decree into execution. And it is very plain that if God purposed that only the elect should be saved, and others left to the just consequences of their sins, Christ could not have designed the benefit of his death for all men.

(See doctrine of Predestination.)

2. Because if Christ has died for all men it is unjust and impossible that any should be lost. If Christ satisfied divine justice for all why should any have to undergo the punishment of sin? God can not require satisfaction twice. To say that Christ died for all must lead to believe that none will be lost, that is to Universalism.

3. Because Scripture teaches that if Christ died for us, all the blessings of Christ will be given to us, but they are not given to all, therefore it can not be that Christ died for all.

Rom. 8: 32. "He that spared not his own Son, but

delivered him up for us all, how shall he not also with him freely give us all things?" Vss. 33-39.

See Rom. 5: 8-10.

4. Because the intercession of Christ extends just as far as his sacrifice. They are two parts of his one office. And Christ expressly declares he does not pray for all.

John 17:9: "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me; for they are thine." Rom. 8: 33, 34.

5. Because it is not true that it is left to man's free will whether he will be saved or not. Christ has deserved every part of salvation, from regeneration to glorification, and all is given through grace. The application of salvation extends equally far as the purchasing.

Eph. 2: 8: "For by grace have ye been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."

On what do those who believe in a general atonement build their doctrine?

1. On the fact that the invitations and promises of the gospel are general. All people are invited and the promise is to all who believe.

2. On such texts that say that Christ was given to the world and died for the world or for all.

What is our answer to these arguments?

In regard to the first argument look up what we have written about internal calling, under the head of the doctrine of salvation.

In regard to the texts which declare that Christ was given to the world, that he is a propitiation for the world, and that he died for all, it is to be noted that the words *world* and *all* are used with a varying degree of latitude in the Scriptures. Sometimes their meaning

is plainly limited by the context, as I Cor. 15: 22; Rom. 5: 18; John 12: 32; Eph. 1: 10.

In other places the word world is used in contrast to the Jewish nation. The exclusiveness of the Jews limited the possibility of salvation to their people, to emphasize that the heathen also were included, the writers used the word world, but this does not necessarily mean every individual in the world.

And remember Scripture must be compared with Scripture, the general terms must be defined by the more definite ones. Compare I Tim. 2: 6 and Matt. 20: 28; Heb. 9: 28.

What part of Christ's priestly work is continuous?

His intercession, his appearing before the face of God for us.

Heb. 9: 24: "For Christ entered not into a holy place made with hands, like in pattern to the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us."

I John 1: 2: "And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."

What is Christ's intercession?

That he appears in the presence of the Father as the Advocate for his people, and on the grounds of his obedience gains acceptance for his people and their services.

Christ has the same nature as his people, has experienced their sorrows and temptations, he can therefore sympathize with them, and he adapts his ceaseless intercession to their various needs and experiences.

What relation does the Holy Spirit sustain to the intercession of Christ?

In answer to Christ's intercession the Holy Spirit is given to him for his people, and the Holy Spirit is sent

by Christ to declare the mind of Christ to us and to apply to us the merits of Christ. Because of Christ's intercession the Holy Spirit is given us as Comforter, to enlighten and quicken our hearts, and to be the Advocate of Christ within us. John 14:26; 15:26. Rom. 8:26, 27.

Thus we have an Advocate for us in heaven, and an Advocate within us.

What is Christ's work as King, his third office?

To govern his people, and to reign over the world till he has put all enemies under his feet.*

I Cor. 15: 25: "For he must reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. Vs. 26. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death."

John 18:36: "Jesus answered: My kingdom is not of this world."

Is Jesus King in more than one respect?

Yes, he is King as God and as Mediator.

How does the sovereignty of Christ as God differ from his sovereignty as Mediator?

* About the Kingship of our Lord, the teaching of some followers of premillennialism, see ch. VIII, differs from that of the Reformed Standards, in positing an essential difference between Israel and the Church, and in claiming that the kingdom of Christ is still future, and will not be established until the Millennium begins. During this present dispensation, which is at times called "the Church age", Christ cannot properly be called "King of the Church", in a juridical, but only in an organic sense. We reject the teaching of the essential difference between Israel and the Church, because Paul in Ephesians 3:6 states, that in the New Testament the Gentiles are fellow-heirs and of the same body, and no longer as formerly, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the Covenant of promises. In Romans 11:17-22 it is declared that the Gentiles are grafted into one olive tree. In Isaiah 54:2 it is the one tent whose curtains are to be stretched, while in John 10:16, our Lord predicts, after speaking of other sheep, not of the Jewish fold—that they shall become one flock. The unity of God's people of all ages is expressed in Art. 27 of our Confession, stating: "This Church has been from the beginning of the world, and will be to the end thereof, which is evident from this, that Christ is an eternal King, which without subjects, cannot be." (Further comment, see page 309.)

His sovereignty as God is essential to his nature, is underived, absolute, eternal and unchangeable.

His sovereignty as Mediator is given him by his Father as a reward for his obedience. It is a special sovereignty having respect to the salvation of his people and to the administration of the provisions of the covenant of grace.

As God all power and authority is his, but as Mediator all power was given him. As God he has essential sovereignty, as Mediator he has official sovereignty.

Matt. 28: 18: "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth."

What is the extent of the kingdom of Christ as Mediator?

1. In a general sense it embraces the whole universe.
2. In a special sense it embraces the Church.

The first has been called the kingdom of power, the second the kingdom of grace. The kingdom of power or Christ's providential government over the universe is administered with the design of accomplishing the support, defense, enrichment and glory of the kingdom of grace. The affairs of the history of the world are made to serve the welfare of the church.

What is the nature of Christ's kingdom of grace?

It is a spiritual kingdom. The King, the citizens, the manner of government, the laws, the blessings and penalties of the kingdom,—all are spiritual.

What is the duration of this spiritual kingdom?

It lasts from the beginning of the Church on earth, that is from Paradise, till the end of time, and then the kingdom of grace will be transferred into the kingdom of glory. This kingdom includes all redeemed and saved by Christ, believers of every time and place.

What are the means whereby the kingdom of grace is ruled and propagated?

The word of God and the work of the Holy Spirit.

Through these two means Christ rules the most inward life of his people, converting, sanctifying, comforting, preserving and at last glorifying them.

What should be our prayer in regard to the offices of the Savior?

That he may indeed be our personal Prophet, Priest and King.

And accompanying this prayer there must be an intelligent devotion to Christ and study of his word to know what he has been made for us, our wisdom, righteousness, holiness and complete redemption. Through him we shall thus be privileged to be prophets, priests and kings ourselves, to share in his word and in his joy.

THE STATES OF CHRIST

We have thus far treated of Christ's natures, names and offices, we have now come to his states.

There are two states in the life of our Mediator: a state of humiliation and a state of exaltation.

What do we understand by a state as that word is used here?

A state is the relation in which a person stands toward the law. There are only two relations toward the law possible; a relation of innocence or of guilt: everybody is either innocent or guilty. If innocent the law protects and advances, if guilty the law condemns and brings suffering on the head of the transgressors. The innocent are at liberty, are free and defended by the powers of justice. The guilty lose their liberty and suffer the penalty of the law at the hands of the powers of justice.

In his incarnation Christ took the exact place of his people, he assumed the position of guilt. He entered into that relation to the law which his people occupy by nature. Therefore, Christ had to suffer the punishment which the law pronounces on the guilty. To undergo this punishment Christ was humiliated, that is, "he emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, . . . he humbled himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross." Phil. 2: 7, 8.

This entering into the position of guilt with its consequent suffering of punishment was Christ's state of humiliation.

After Christ had satisfied the law in full he entered the relation of innocence toward the law, and being no longer counted guilty he did not have to suffer any more, but was transferred to the fullest liberty and joy, he was lifted up to honor and glory, to the state of exaltation, in which he now is in heavenly glory.

In the state of humiliation Christ merited salvation for us; in the state of exaltation he applies salvation to us.

What did the humiliation of Christ include?

It included his humble *birth*, his *suffering*, his *death*, his *burial*, his *descent into hell*.

Thus his humiliation was gradual, and extended from his incarnation to his resurrection to glory.

Why can Christ's humble birth be counted part of his humiliation?

Because Christ emptied himself of his heavenly glory and took the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men. Phil. 2: 7.

The assumption of our nature in itself could not be considered a humiliation, for Christ even now in glory

still retains the human nature, but the fact that he assumed our nature as weakened and subject to the punishment due to sin made his birth an important part of his humiliation.

He became a servant, one with suffering humanity, and completely dependent on a mere human being, on Mother Mary. Furthermore, the circumstances under which Christ was born added to his humiliation, for though his Mother was of lofty lineage she was poor, and Jesus spent his life in comparative poverty. "The Son of man hath not where to lay his head." Matt 8: 20.

Was the fact that Jesus was born under the law also part of his humiliation?

Yes, indeed, Gal. 4: 4. Christ as God was the Author of the law and that he subjected himself to it was humiliating. Especially because he submitted to the penalty of the law. He was born precisely in the position of his people, and so he had to obey the law as a rule of duty, and he placed himself under the law as already broken and already pronouncing the sentence of death on all born under its requirements.

In Adam we all broke the law and are, therefor, under the penalty of death. Christ took our position and was also by being born under the law subject to death. Christ as Mediator assumed the curse of the law that rested on us.

Was Christ also born under the ceremonial laws?

Yes, born as a Jew he was subject to these, but as they were typical ordinances pointing to Christ, he has by his obedience fulfilled them, so that they are now no longer in force.

In what sense has Christ fulfilled the moral law for us?

1. He has borne the curse of the law, so that his

people are no longer subject to death as the curse of the law. Gal. 3: 10, 13; 4: 4, 5.

2. He has fulfilled the law by his obedience as a condition to gain eternal life, so that it is no longer said to us: obey the law perfectly that you may live eternally.

3. He has not fulfilled the law for us as a rule of life. Our obligation to keep the law as a rule of duty is eternal, and has been if possible even increased since Christ died to save us from the curse. We now in gratitude ought to live most devotedly according to the law. Gal. 2: 19, 20. Rom. 6 and 7.

What constituted the suffering of Christ?

His suffering in soul and body: mental anguish and grief, caused by his contact with sinners in their misery, by the temptations of Satan, and by the wrath of God; bodily pain and hunger, thirst and fatigue.

We might distinguish between the usual suffering all through his life, and the special suffering at the end of his life.

What was the wrath of God which Jesus suffered?

Not a blind rage, fitful and transient, but a steady hatred of sin and an inflexible demand that it be adequately punished.

What death did Christ die?

The death of the cross. This form of death was most painful and shameful, reserved for slaves and the most atrocious criminals; God himself had branded it as most peculiarly infamous, saying by Moses, "he that is hanged is accursed of God," Deut. 21:23; and by Paul: "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." Gal. 3:13.

That the Lord of glory and Prince of life should become a captive of death was surely the depth of abasement. He was exhibited to the universe as in some way

chargeable with sin, for "the wages of sin is death." Rom. 6:23.

Was the death of Christ equivalent for the death of all his saints?

Yes, though he did not suffer eternal death in a literal sense, for he was not in hell, and did not suffer self condemnation and despair as the lost do, yet because of the infinite value of his person it was sufficient to atone for even the sins of the whole world.

And certainly the holy nature of Christ must have intensely felt the pain and shame of death and must have suffered unutterable agony as he cried out: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Matt. 27: 46.

Was the burial of Christ part of his humiliation?

Yes, for us it is the greatest humiliation that our bodies as lifeless corpses must be surrendered to the grave, much more was it a humiliation for Christ that his body had to remain under the power of death and be laid in the tomb. For us it is, however, also a comfort to know that Christ has sanctified the grave by his own entrance into it.

What do we understand by Christ's descent into hell?

That he suffered before his actual death the terrors of hell in his soul and thus was humbled into the very depths of death.

Our Catechism answers this question thus: "That in my greatest temptations, I may be assured, and wholly comfort myself in this that my Lord Jesus Christ, by his inexpressible anguish, pains, terrors, and hellish agonies, in which he was plunged during his suffering, but especially on the cross, hath delivered me from the anguish and torments of hell." Question 44.

"The Roman Catholic Church, on the basis of

ancient traditions, interprets this phase to mean that Christ after his death went in his entire person as God-man, to the *Limbus Patrum*, or that department of Hades in which the Old Testament saints remained waiting for the revelation and application to them of his salvation. Here he preached the gospel, and brought them out to heaven."

"The Lutherans hold that Christ's death was the last stage of his humiliation, and his descent into Hades the first stage of his exaltation, since he went to reveal and consummate his victory over Satan and the powers of darkness and to pronounce their sentence of condemnation." Hodge.

Our objections to these views are:

1. That Christ could not as the entire God-man go to Hades, for his body was yet in the grave.

2. That Christ himself told the murderer on the cross he was going to Paradise, and when he died he committed his spirit into the hands of the Father.

3. While his body was yet under the power of death it was no time for him to triumph over the powers of darkness. He was still in humiliation.

What is included in the exaltation of Christ?

His resurrection from the dead; his ascension to heaven; his sitting at the right hand of the Father; his coming again to judge the world.

According to which nature was Christ exalted?

According to his human nature, the same nature that was humiliated in suffering and death.

In some respects the divine nature of Christ also shared in his exaltation. While he was in the state of humiliation the glory of the divine nature was veiled from the eyes of the creatures, and as Mediator Christ was the Servant of the Father, even occupying the place

of the sinner. As a reward for this voluntary humiliation the Father highly exalted him, his official position was changed, and the glory of his divinity was again manifested.

While it is thus true that Christ as the co-equal Son of the Father could not be exalted, for God can not be exalted higher than he is, yet in so far as Christ emptied himself, Phil. 2: 7, his divine nature in its union with the human also shared in his exaltation. Phil. 2: 8, 9. Heb. 12: 2.

Of what was the exaltation of Christ an evidence?

That he had satisfied all the demands of the law, and could therefore now enter from under the wrath of God into his favor and pleasure.

Because he was no longer under the curse of the law he was taken from the deep abasement to glory, to dispense the blessings he secured for his church.

How long was Jesus in the tomb?

From Friday evening till Sunday morning. This was not three full days, but according to Jewish method of reckoning time a part of a day was called a day. To the Jew the expression "after three days" could mean in the third day or within three days.

By whose power was Jesus raised from the dead?

The Scriptures ascribe his resurrection to himself and to the Father.

He declared: "I lay down my life, that I may take it again." John 10: 17, 18.

Acts 13: 33: "God raised up Jesus." Also Rom. 10: 9; Eph. 1: 20.

The Father and the Son are one in Being, therefore, what the one does may be ascribed to both, and in the resurrection of Christ's body both Persons were actively interested; the Father authorized the resurrection and

sent the Spirit to raise the body, and Jesus himself arose.

Did the same body arise that was buried in Joseph's tomb?

Yes, it was the same body, but it was glorified. It was after the resurrection changed to a spiritual body. It was still a material body of flesh and bone, but so transformed and filled and sustained by the Holy Spirit that it is called a spiritual body. It is the first spiritual body, and the example and model of the new bodies of the saints after the resurrection. See I Cor. 15. Luke 24: 38.

The body of Jesus, raised from the dead can no more suffer weakness and death, it is incorruptible and immortal, and the most perfect unity and harmony exists between soul and body, and every function of both.

What doth the resurrection of Christ profit us?

"First, by his resurrection he hath overcome death, that he might make us partakers of that righteousness which he had purchased for us by his death; secondly, we are also by his power raised up to a new life; and lastly, the resurrection of Christ is a sure pledge of our blessed resurrection." Heidelb. Cat., Ques. 45.

When and from where did Christ ascend to heaven?

He ascended forty days after his resurrection, from a portion of the Mount of Olives, near the village of Bethany.

What is the ascension of Christ an evidence of?

It is an evidence of his complete exaltation, that his work as Mediator was accepted by the Father and that Christ was rightly entitled to the heavenly glory. It also proved that our Savior is supreme over the laws and forces of nature. His ascension was a miracle.

What is meant by Christ sitting at the right hand of the Father?

This is a figurative expression, for God has no right hand in a literal sense. With kings and emperors of earth the right hand is the place of honor and power, and so this expression sets forth the supreme glorification of Christ in heaven, he is there exalted to supreme and universal glory, felicity and power over all principalities and every name that is named. He sits to rule, the angels stand to serve. He also as the great High Priest intercedes continually in heaven for his people.

John 14: 2: "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you."

Col. 3: 1: "If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God." I Cor. 15: 25; Rom. 8: 34; Matt. 28: 18-20.

What part of Christ's exaltation is reserved till the end of the world?

His coming again to judge the living and the dead. He shall appear in bodily form and all shall see him. At present he rules as King, at last he comes as Judge. All must then recognize his sovereignty, and he shall be glorious before the awe-stricken world.

Phil. 3:20, 21; Acts 1:10: "This Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven."

Until he comes to judge Christ is seated on his throne, from where he effectually applies the salvation which he previously achieved for his people in his humiliation. The way in which he applies the benefits of his redemption through the Holy Spirit is treated in the next division.

CHAPTER V

THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

In the former division we have seen that Christ was humiliated to secure salvation for us and that he was exalted to apply salvation to us. His work is not yet accomplished, he is ever at the Father's right hand exercising his offices of Prophet, Priest and King in behalf of his Church, which he has bought with his blood. From his throne in glory he dispenses the blessings he secured for us in the flesh on earth. To him belongs the applying of salvation as well as the earning. And the applying is as necessary as the meriting. Man left to his own choice would never desire or be able to apply the merits of Christ to his salvation. Christ must and does apply his own merits. He does this through the Holy Spirit in a regularly ordained way or order. He does not translate the sinner at once from his condition of being dead in sin and misery to the full glory of life in heaven, but rather does he apply one part of his salvation after another, one part to prepare for the reception of another. There is a fixed process and progressive order that Christ follows in application of his benefits to his people. The entire creation is full of God's laws and order; especially in the development of all living things is there an orderly progress, and so in the transformation of the sinner into a saint there is an established order, a progressive application of salvation. To

the consciousness of those who are saved there is not an equal comprehension of the various parts of salvation, in fact of some parts we have not a conscious experience as they are applied to us, as e.g., regeneration. We can not, therefore, question the experience of the saints to know in what order Christ applies his blessings, but the study of the Word of God reveals to us what plan God has established, and according to the established rule of God's word must we present the various parts of the scheme of salvation in their proper order. There is, however, on the part of those who have studied the Scriptures no unanimity of opinion as to the exact order in which the blessings of Christ are applied to us. We will in our presentation follow the order that is very commonly followed by Reformed theologians. According to this plan the following are the blessings of Christ in the given order: *Vocation, or Calling, Regeneration, Conversion, Faith, Justification, and Sanctification.*

In the development of our description of each of these parts of the order of salvation we beg the reader to notice the following points:

1. That God has made complete provision for the removal of sin, of guilt and of pollution, and of spiritual death which is the necessary consequence of sin, and that he has also provided righteousness and holiness, and everything necessary for the growth of spiritual life. There is according to the order given above provision for the mortification of the old man and the quickening of the new man.

Thus: Justification means the removal of the guilt of sin; and in Regeneration, Conversion and Sanctification the image of God is restored in us and developed, whereby the pollution and power of sin is overcome.

2. The second point the attentive reader will notice

is, that all the blessings of salvation are the fruits of Christ's obedience, and that by the receiving of these blessings we are either for the first time brought into living fellowship with Christ or are improved and built up in our living union with Christ. Thus in Regeneration our union with Christ is begun, is established, and in our conversion and sanctification we grow in living fellowship and union with Christ. Every blessing comes to us out of Christ, who is made of God to be our righteousness, sanctification, wisdom, and complete redemption. I Cor. 1:30.

3. The blessings above enumerated are those which we receive in this life, there are others reserved for the saints to be inherited after this life, as their resurrection, their complete justification in the final judgment, and eternal life.

VOCATION OR CALLING

EXTERNAL CALLING

Of how many kinds of calling does the Bible speak?

Of two kinds: an external and an internal calling.

What is the external calling?

It is the declaration of the word of God to all mankind wherever the gospel is brought.

It includes: First—A declaration of the plan of salvation. Second. A declaration of duty on the part of the sinner to repent and believe. Third. A declaration of the motives which ought to influence the sinner's mind, such as fear or hope, remorse or gratitude. Fourth. A promise of acceptance in the case of all those who comply with the conditions.—Dr. Hodge.

What is included in the word of God?

The law and the gospel.

To whom has the extending of the external calling been especially entrusted?

To the Church, which through its appointed and qualified officials must preach the gospel to all creatures. Matt. 28:19.

All christians are called to call others to the service of God through Jesus Christ, but the officials of the Church have a direct and official appointment to declare divine revelation and ask men to accept it in the name of God. Under the Old Testament these officials were the Priests and Levites, and the Prophets; under the new dispensation they are the Apostles and Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers. Eph. 4:11.

Is the external calling sufficient to salvation?

No, it is necessary, but not sufficient. God uses the external calling as a means to salvation through the Holy Spirit, but if the internal calling is not added to the external it does not avail to salvation. I Cor. 3:6, 7.

Why should the gospel be preached to the non-elect for whom it will never be a power of God unto salvation?

This question is suggested by the remarks of those who reject the doctrine of election. They tell us that our preaching to the non-elect is out of place, since they can not and will not believe, according to our own explanation of the truth, and that our offering to them the gospel is insincere and useless. They seem to think the preaching of the gospel to all people alike is possible only when we can say to all: Christ has died for you all and now it is left to you to accept his salvation by your own free choice.

Our answer to these objections is as follows:

1. We preach the gospel to all, because God has commanded us to do so. The rule of our conduct is to be the revealed will of God. Whether we can or can

not harmonize this command with the doctrine of election and the fact that but few are able to accept it, does not deter us from doing as commanded. The result of our preaching we leave to God, who has appointed the preaching of his word as one means to the salvation of his people.

God can harmonize these two: election and a universal call to all to repent, though we may not be able to do so.

God uses the services of men, who do not know the secret purpose of God, and to them there is no other possibility than to preach the revealed will to all. We know and expect the seed will fall in different kinds of soil.

2. We do not find authority in Scripture to say to all men that Christ has died for them all and that their sins are atoned for, and that now they can all accept salvation if they but will.

This is not the message of the external calling. The Bible nowhere states that the outcome of the plan of salvation is left to the free will of man, so that it is doubtful whether few or many are finally saved, but it states explicitly that God provided complete salvation for those he has known and loved from eternity, and that faith whereby man first trusts in Christ is itself a gift of God, not an arbitrary work of man.

3. We preach the gospel to all, for it is abundantly suited to the needs of all, and it is to the interest of all to accept it. It is an evidence of the fact that God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that he turn and live. And even though many are not saved who hear the gospel, it is nevertheless a source of many blessings to them.

All religious and moral principles would be lost if

God did not continually call man back to himself and condemn sin. Sin and the corruption of sin are checked; morality, justice, civilization, and refinement are preserved through the preaching of God's word to the world.

4. The preaching of God's word to the world is an evidence that God has not given up his claim on man, though man may have turned away from God. The sinner thinks he is free to ignore God and turn to his own chosen ways, but God calls him to return, and thus maintains his inviolable right to man's obedience.

At present and in the judgment day God will glorify himself through his revelation declared to us all. The highest purpose of everything is the glory of God, and this is gained by maintaining even before the Godless world God's unchangeable claim to our faith and obedience.

5. The preaching of God's word to all is for those who are in due time to believe a preparatory measure, to arouse their faith and guide their christian life when once they have been turned to God.

The preaching of the word does not in itself prepare the soul to be saved, but it is an evidence of the love of God that is training the soul and pointing the way in which it must go when once God has efficaciously called from darkness to light. God leads each soul according to the light it has, and the more light the better.

Is there beside the verbal call of God's word also another method whereby God calls externally?

Yes, there is also a calling nature, that proceeds from all the work of God's hand, from the history of the past and the experiences of our own lives. God has not withdrawn the evidence of his existence from the world, but even to the heathen does he in a measure

reveal himself in the work of his hand and the leading of his providence.

Rom. 1:19,20: "Because that which is known of God is manifest in them; for God manifested it to them. For the invisible things of him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even his everlasting power and divinity; that they may be without excuse." Acts 14:17; 17:27, 28.

This very general revelation of God in nature is not sufficient to lead to a true knowledge of God; it is, however, the means of preserving respect for religion and morality in the world, and for many it is the basis on which the better understanding of God from the word and the Spirit is built. To the pious soul everything speaks of God.

THE INTERNAL CALLING

How must we distinguish the internal calling?

We must distinguish internal calling in a twofold way: a *creative calling* and an *effectual calling*.

By the creative calling we mean that act of God whereby he calls the things that are not as though they were. God calls or speaks and by his speaking he creates. Thus in the beginning he said "Let there be light, and there was light." The whole of creation was thus produced by the creative word of God.

In spiritual matters God likewise speaks and by his speaking creates life in the dead. Rom. 4:17: "Even God, who giveth life to the dead, and calleth the things that are not, as though they were."

This creative calling originates. Unless God has thus spoken there is nothing. By his creative calling he brings us in vital union with Christ and makes us spiritually alive. Creative calling is the first work of grace.

It is similar in its working upon the sinner as Jesus'

calling to Lazarus to come forth from the dead. By this calling life is restored and the power to hear is created in us. When God thus speaks to us we are born again, are regenerated. This calling is immediate, that is, God employs no outward means to bring it about, but immediately calls life into existence in the heart.

By the *effectual calling* we mean that God calls the soul of man to turn from its state of alienation and enmity towards God to a new state of fellowship and obedience to God.

The new life implanted by the creative calling is called into activity to obey the revealed will of God by the effectual calling. The effectual calling is accomplished by the external calling being applied to the heart through the Holy Spirit. The effectual calling is, therefore, mediate, that is, through outward means supernaturally applied.

Effectual calling does not originate new life as creative calling does, but it causes the new life to respond to the word of God.

Before this, effectual calling did not mean much to the soul, did not control the conduct of life; after the effectual calling has come, the truth of God's word convicts and persuades us to obey our God.

Acts 16:14: "And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, one that worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened to give heed unto the things which were spoken by Paul."

In those in whom the new life has been implanted from early childhood the effectual calling comes later when the mind has learned something of the external calling.

How can it be proven that the internal calling is distinct from the external calling?

From the fact that the Scriptures teach that the Spirit's influence is necessary to the reception of the truth. Man by nature is said to be blind and dead in trespasses and sins. I Cor. 2:14; II Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:1.

Eph. 2:8: "For by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."

See Eph. 1:17, 18.

The Scriptures distinguish between the two calls: of the subjects of one it says: "Many are called and few are chosen," and of the other calling it is said, "whom he called, them he also justified," and "every man therefore who hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me." John 6:45.

What is the Pelagian view of internal calling?

Pelagians deny original sin, and therefore teach that man has the same and full ability of his own will to cease from sin at any time as to continue in its practice. They teach that the Holy Spirit produces no inward change in the heart of man, the only influence exerted is by the Bible, which by its moral truths and motives exerts a moral influence for good upon the soul.

According to this view there is no internal calling or regeneration.

What is the Arminian view?

The Arminians admit the doctrine of man's total depravity, and that in consequence thereof man is utterly unable to do anything aright in the unaided exercise of his natural faculties.

Nevertheless, since Christ died equally for every man, as they teach, sufficient grace is given to all men, enabling them to believe and be saved if they will. If the sinner will only improve the sufficient grace given to him, he will coöperate with God and be saved.

Our objections to this theory are that it is inconsis-

tent with the doctrine of election, and that the Scriptures teach that salvation is not dependent on the free will of man, but is a special and irresistible gift of God.

Rom. 9:16: "So then it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that hath mercy."

Philippians 2:13: "For it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work, for his good pleasure."

The Reformed teaching does not know anything of a sufficient grace that can be used or resisted at the pleasure of the sinner. We do, however, believe God gives a measure of common grace to all people, whereby he checks the workings of sin in the heart and through the moral influences of the truth persuades the soul to a higher moral life. But this common grace does not change the nature of the heart, does not give ability to arise from the dead and to lead a godly life. What is necessary is efficacious grace, the immediate energy of the Holy Ghost, which implants and calls to a new spiritual life, which acts not merely *upon* the will of man but *in* his will itself, changing the governing desires, and giving a new direction to the active powers of the soul.

REGENERATION

What are the various terms used in Scripture to designate Regeneration?

Being born anew, John 3:3; Being born of water and the Spirit, John 3:5; Making alive, Eph. 2:1, 5; Passing from death to life, I John 3:14; Begetting or bringing forth, James 1:18; Being born of God, John 1:13; Giving life, John 5:21; Begotten again, not of corruptible, but incorruptible seed, through the word of God, I Pet. 1:23; Begotten again unto a living hope, I Pet. 1:23; washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, Titus 3:5.

In the Old Testament it is termed: circumcision of the heart, Deut. 30:6. "And Jehovah thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live."

Giving a new heart, Ezek. 36:26: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh."

The subjects of regeneration are said to be "alive from the dead," Rom. 6:13; to be "new creatures" II Cor. 5:17, to be "God's workmanship," Eph. 2:10.

We give these various terms, which all speak of the same work of God from different points of view, that we may have a good scriptural conception of what regeneration is.

What is evident from the above terms used for regeneration?

That it is absolutely necessary if the sinner is to be a child of God and alive from the dead, for except one be born again he can not enter the kingdom of God, John 3:5.

It is further evident that it is entirely a work of God, a work which man undergoes, but wherein he himself does not act. Such terms as: being born again, being made alive, begotten again, etc., plainly prove that man is not active but passive in his regeneration. It is of sovereign grace.

Further, it is taught that regeneration is the beginning and principal of all succeeding work of grace. Conversion and sanctification, repentance and faith result from regeneration. The new birth is the root of which the following work of grace is the blossom and fruit.

How may we now define regeneration?

We prefer to define it in a two-fold way:

1. It is the implanting of a new principle of life by the Holy Spirit in the heart of a sinner who is by nature dead in trespasses and sins.

This is regeneration in a narrower sense. As a result of this implanting of a new principle in the heart the nature of the heart is in principle changed, the old man or old nature and disposition of the heart is mortified and dethroned; and we are also by regeneration made part of the spiritual body of Christ.

Regeneration in the narrower sense is produced by the creative calling of God. The Bible in fact speaks of the same work of grace as regeneration and as calling. Paul, viewing the beginning of the work of grace from God's side, speaks of our *being called* into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and of *being called* into his own kingdom and glory. I Cor. 1:9; I Thess. 2:12; Gal. 5:13.

John, viewing the new life of the believer especially in its relation to the former sinful life, speaks of this new life as produced by a new birth, as being born of the Holy Spirit and of water. The natural birth caused us to be of the world, from below, of the devil, as walking in the dark, and not knowing God. John 8:23; 15:19; 8:44; 12:35; 8:19. By the new birth alone do we enter the kingdom of heaven. John 3:4-8.

2. In a wider sense regeneration is the moral renewing of man by the word and Spirit of God. In this wider sense faith, conversion and sanctification are included often under the term of regeneration.

In our day we usually employ the word regeneration in the narrower sense, meaning thereby the first implanting of spiritual life in the heart by the Holy Spirit.

Formerly the term was generally used in the wider

sense. Thus our Conf. of Faith Art XXIV: "we believe that this true faith being wrought in man by the hearing of the word of God, and the operation of the Holy Ghost, doth regenerate and make him a new man, causing him to live a new life, and freeing him from the bondage of sin."

The Canons of Dordrecht, III and IV, Art. 12, is very beautiful on this subject: "And this is the regeneration so highly celebrated in Scripture and denominated a new creation; a resurrection from the dead; a making alive, which God works in us without our aid. But this is no wise effected merely by the external preaching of the Gospel, by moral suasion, or such a mode of operation, that after God has performed his part, it still remains in the power of man to be regenerated or not, to be converted or to continue unconverted; but it is evidently a supernatural work, most powerful, and at the same time most delightful, astonishing, mysterious and ineffable; not inferior in efficacy to creation or the resurrection from the dead, as the Scripture inspired by the Author of this work declares; so that all in whose hearts God works in this marvellous manner are certainly infallibly and effectually regenerated, and do actually believe. Whereupon the will thus renewed, is not only actuated and influenced by God, but in consequence of this influence, becomes itself active. Wherefore, also man is himself rightly said to believe and repent, by virtue of that grace received."

What is restored in man by regeneration?

The image of God in man's heart. Man does not receive a new soul, and no new faculties of understanding and will and affections, but the character, the disposition and principle of his soul and of all his faculties is renewed.

Without the new birth the character of the heart or soul is sinful, the understanding is darkened in regard to spiritual facts, the will is perverse and the affections are unholy and irregular, but by the irresistible work of the Holy Spirit the soul receives a new nature or holy disposition, the very center of man's spiritual life is changed, the understanding is enlightened, the will is turned towards the law of God, and the affections are sanctified. In regeneration of course all this is only done in principle, to be developed by the following work of grace.

At what age does regeneration occur?

It may occur at any age, from early infancy to old age.

Infants are by nature depraved, and to inherit the kingdom of God must be born again. The soul of an infant is not yet self-conscious, and its faculties are not developed, yet the heart of an infant can be renewed by the Holy Spirit as well as the heart of an adult. And certainly a great number of children manifest that they have been born again in tender youth, their fear of God, their sorrow for sin and need of prayer prove this, while of the children of believers who die in early life, we have no doubt but what they are with their covenant God, and have, therefore, been born again.

Those born again in later life soon manifest this change of heart by their change of life, by their conversion, when they turn to God in penitence and submit themselves in obedience to God's word. When regeneration has occurred in infancy a definite experience of conversion is usually not known, but there is a gradual growing up in the service of God.

What wrong views are held concerning regeneration?

The Pelagian view, that regeneration is a mere reformation of life and habits. It is considered a work of man himself.

The Roman Catholic view, that regeneration is accomplished by baptism.

Roman Catholics hold that in baptism sins are forgiven, the moral nature of the heart renewed, and man made a son and heir of God.

They also hold that the grace of regeneration can again be lost by sin.

Does regeneration occur through the use of the word of God as a means or instrument of the Holy Spirit, or is it wrought by the Holy Spirit without the word of God?

There are two views held in our Reformed circles as to this point. Some hold that regeneration is accomplished by the Holy Spirit immediately, that is, without any means; others hold that it is wrought by the Holy Spirit through the means of the word of God. That word then either heard or read is the instrument whereby the Spirit speaks to the heart and changes its nature.

This difference of opinion concerning the word of God as a means in regeneration is principally caused by the views one holds as to the extent of the work of regeneration. As above described, regeneration can be taken in a narrower and in a wider sense. In the narrower sense it is the first implanting of spiritual life, the being born of God, the being made alive. In this sense it is altogether and entirely a work of the Holy Spirit alone. The Holy Spirit is the Author of all life, and so the new spiritual life in God's children is a work, a gift of the Holy Spirit, which he immediately creates in the heart.

Regeneration in the wider sense as the entire renewing of the heart, or even as the first manifestation of spiritual life in outward conduct, is of course wrought by the Holy Spirit through the word of God. In faith, in conversion and in sanctification God influences and leads his people by persuasion, by convicting them of sin, and of the truth of his word as a guide for faith and duty. Thus persuaded by the Holy Spirit through the word of God man turns from the world to God, from darkness to light, and is ever more thereby renewed in heart and conduct. In the wider sense regeneration is, therefore, through the word as a means of the Holy Spirit.

Regeneration in the narrower sense may therefore occur before ever the word of God is known, in principle the heart may be renewed even before there is consciousness of the fact, as in little children.

The question whether heathen may be born again before ever the gospel reaches them is a mystery that no one is able to solve, and the putting of such a question is only fit to arouse speculation. The fact of which we are sure is that God will never regenerate any heart where there is no word of God to nourish and guide the new life he has given. The word is food and light for the renewed heart; where it is entirely lacking the new life would famish.

CONVERSION

What is the meaning of the word conversion?

Turning about, and in a theological sense it means the act of turning or of being turned from a sinful course to a life of obedience and service to God.

The words used in the original languages of Scrip-

ture to designate conversion mean: to change the mind; to turn about, return; to *repent*.

From these words it is evident that conversion is not merely an outward reformation, but first of all a change of mind and conduct. First of all the mind is changed—the intellect views and apprehends things in a changed way, and the will chooses differently. There is a change of appreciation, of desires and of aspirations.

Then there is a turning around or a returning, as when one who has been going the wrong way turns to face the right way. Conversion, therefore, includes a turning or changing of heart and conduct. The sinner has been going wrong to his own doom, he is changed in heart and mind to behold the wrong and the threatening death, and therefore, he turns about to God, to the right, to safety and life. This change or turning is of course not done in a cold, speculative, unfeeling way, as if one were changing his course in a trifling and unimportant matter, for it is the changing of a life course, a change of the direction of life. Such a change could not occur in a listless, half-hearted way, the issues involved and the effort it cost to break away from an established course of life to a new course would forbid any feeble and heartless efforts. To change a life's course can only result from deep conviction that the old way is wrong and the new is right. Such a conviction must stir the whole soul to make a lasting change possible, so that the person will not revert to his old sinful course, but persist in the new way towards God. And indeed, in conversion there is a whole-hearted turning, a deliberate forsaking of the evil way and a surrendering of life to the way of God's commandments. The forsaking of the evil way is done in sorrow and regret, in self-condemnation and hatred of sin; the turning

towards God is done in faith and hope that God will accept the soul, forgive and restore into his favor according to his promises. There is a turning away in confession of sin on the one hand, a turning to God in faith on the other hand. Thus there are two parts in conversion: *repentance* and *faith*.

We will devote a special chapter to the treatment of faith, so we will not broaden out on this part of conversion under the present head, but refer mostly to repentance in this connection.

In what connection does conversion stand towards regeneration or effectual calling?

It is the result of regeneration. The soul having been renewed and called from darkness to light responds by turning from its sinful way to the way of God's will. In the new birth God has turned the heart, changed its inner nature, conversion is the outward manifestation and expression of the inward change.

Is conversion a work of God or of man?

It is both, wrought upon by God's Spirit the sinner turns.

Man is turned by God and he turns himself. The new life given in regeneration is never left to itself, but God must constantly sustain and reinforce and guide this, that it may gain control in the heart and express itself in the activity of life.

As all other life in plant and animal and man depends upon the abiding care and sustenance of God, so in particular must God ever sustain the new life in the heart of his children. And the activity of this life is dependent on his inworking and guidance.

Man is not given a certain measure of power to do with as he wills, but in every act he is dependent on the inspiration of God.

Therefore, his conversion is first of all God's work, God causes the regenerated heart to turn in sorrow from sin and in faith to God. In response to this influence in his heart the sinner gladly turns. He is not forced or constrained, but his will is renewed, so that he wills what God wills. In conversion man himself acts, he turns, he repents and believes, though he is not himself the first cause of his conversion.

Jer. 31: 18: "Turn thou me and I shall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God."

Which of the two parts of conversion precedes, repentance or faith?

In the actual experience of those being converted it is often difficult to say which precedes, as they usually go together in practical experience. Sorrow for sin is generally accompanied with faith in Christ. In most cases there is, however, a decided experience of repentance, a humiliation before God in contrition of heart under the conviction of sin, and later there follows a more conscious working of faith, the soul is first broken down in remorse and later healed and encouraged by beholding Christ in his sufficiency for salvation. But this is not the conscious experience of each one converted, in some there is in later life, after conversion, a far deeper conviction of sin than in the beginning of christian life, while in the actual experience of conversion faith in Christ is most prominent to their minds. We must be very careful not to dictate a certain method of conversion to all alike, different characters will be differently led by God in their experience of conversion. Some have sinned far more than others, are hardened more in sin, are harder to move from their beaten path, and therefore are differently led by the Holy Spirit than those who were more restrained from a sinful life. Some

have a more emotional nature than others, are easily moved to tears and wailing over sin, while others might not show forth any outward sign of remorse and yet feel more deeply the sinfulness of heart and life.

Our fathers often distinguish between a legal and an evangelical conversion. By a legal conversion they referred to such a turning about as was mainly produced by the soul appreciating the just demands and penalties of the law. Usually deep conviction of sin producing much sorrow and remorse is the prominent characteristic of a legal conversion. Repentance is at first more prominent in a legal conversion than faith, though of course faith is not lacking, for there is no conversion without faith. In an evangelical conversion the promises and invitations of the gospel appeal most strongly to the soul. Here there is also more or less conviction of sin, for no soul would turn to Christ if there were no persuasion of its own sinfulness and danger, but the wooing of God's love, the riches of his grace in Christ Jesus, stands out most clear to the mind in the experience of conversion. The result of an evangelical conversion will be the same as that of a more legal; hatred of evil, and a constant need of the Savior, and an honest desire to serve him in devotion of life, will be the outcome and the evidence of being truly converted.

Many judge the truthfulness of conversion by a certain set of marks and signs which they have found in themselves or others; if one's experience conforms to these marks all is thought to be well, while if one can not truly say that he has had such or such an experience the stamp of approval is withheld from his conversion. But this insisting that every one's conversion must be alike is very unbiblical and very dangerous. Many God-fearing souls have been greatly injured and deprived of

the comfort and hope they might have had, did not others or they themselves try to dictate to the Holy Spirit how he must convert each individual soul. There certainly are general marks which will be found in every conversion, such as repentance and faith, and we might add, a longing to save life from being a failure, and a desire to be of use to the glory of God and the welfare of others, but we can not lay down specific details as marks and signs of conversion that will be a rule for all alike. Instead of asking: how were you converted, it is better to ask: are the evidences or results of conversion found in your life, as e. g., do you heartily love the law of God, is the good and the right more pleasing to you than the evil; is the Lord Jesus needed and loved as Savior; are the people and the Church of God dear to you; would you live a holy life if you could; do you delight in prayer and meditation of God's word? All truly converted would answer in the affirmative to these questions.

Is conversion absolutely necessary?

Yes, indeed it is. But as stated above, there is no exact way or method of conversion that is necessary for all. There need not be a decided crisis in life when the soul turns from evil to God. Many of our covenant children are given the blessings of the covenant of grace in early childhood, they are born again when children, and they grow up in the service and fear of God from tender youth. In such people there is no decided crisis, no conscious turning from a sinful life to the fear of God, and there need not be, for the soul has not wandered far away from God, but was renewed and brought into communion with himself in early life. Such children will according to their age and character manifest the signs of the fear of God, especially a tender conscience, sorrow for wrong and love of prayer. In older

people the experience of conversion may be very gradual, slow turning of the current of life to God, a progressive coming to conviction of the truth of God's word and yielding to it.

A great deal will depend on the outward means of grace, whether these are suitable to the needs of the heart, or whether there is no proper training and teaching of the seeking soul. The word of God is the means used by the Holy Spirit to convict of sin and lead to Christ, therefore this word must be taught in its entirety and adapted to the various ages and conditions of life. A one-sided emphasis on the truth has done a great deal of harm to many souls. If the doctrine of the law and of sin receive nearly all the attention, the result will be a dreading of judgment and little hope of deliverance, because Christ is not held up as the Savior as he ought to be. On the other hand if there is an ignoring of the law and of the terribleness of sin and a one-sided preaching of God's love, there is grave danger of a superficial and emotional conversion that does not last. We must have both law and gospel, and it is profitable to all who are called to teach others that they study the Bible to see how and in what proportion both law and gospel are presented.

Can conversion occur more than once?

The actual and decided conversion occurs but once. After conversion, however, God's children are prone to wander away from God into sin, and they thereby lose conscious fellowship with God and the enjoyment of his presence and love. Then there must come again returning to God in confession of sin and invoking of his mercy through Jesus Christ. In fact, this will more or less be the continual and repeated experience of every Christian. Many have spoken of the need of a daily

conversion, and such there truly is, but this belongs more particularly to the doctrine of sanctification.

May we urge others to conversion?

Indeed we may. It is the duty of all to forsake their evil way and turn to God. None may persist in spending their life in sin and robbing God of his honor in their lives. None may refuse to believe in Christ, and harden in unbelief. The prophets, Christ and his apostles constantly called on the people to repent and believe in God and in Christ Jesus whom he has sent. If some say they can not in their own power believe and turn to God, we must remind them of the need of humiliation before God on this account, and that they cry to God for mercy. Oh, that all, who flippantly declare they can not convert themselves, would truly appreciate the extent of their helplessness. How diligently would they seek the grace of God!

How can we become assured of our conversion?

A good way to pursue to this end is to see if the fruits of conversion are found in our lives: sorrow for sin, trust in the merits of the Savior, love to God, desire to do good works. Also be careful that you do not seek assurance on the grounds of your feeling or experience first of all, but look away to Christ the Savior. The better you can surrender your life to his care and service, the more assured you will become. In this connection look up what is said of saving faith in the next chapter.

FAITH

What is faith?

Faith in its first and most elementary sense is simply the reliance of one person on the truthfulness and integ-

urity of another. When one believes the word of another, he has faith in him.

We are all the time exercising faith in our fellow men. In matters minor or of very grave importance we are depending on the testimony of other people whom we believe to be reliable. There are many matters we have never experienced or seen which are nevertheless true and real for our mind, because we believe the word of others. Thus our knowledge of past history and of distant lands rests entirely on faith. In buying and selling, in taking food or medicine, we are all the time living in faith, for we believe the things to be as presented on the word or assurance of another.

There are some who declare they will not believe what they can not comprehend or see, what to them is unreasonable. These are usually known as rationalists. But their declaration is unreasonable and impracticable. In daily life they believe many things they can not comprehend. No one can comprehend the union of soul and body, the control of the material by the spiritual, the nature of electricity, of gravitation, etc. The world is full of mysteries for our reason, and yet we declare we know much concerning these things, and that, because we believe, we are living in faith.

What are the elements of faith?

By the elements of faith we mean the essential parts of faith, that which is necessary in order that a person may believe. A little thought will soon convince that in faith there are these three parts: knowledge, consent, and trust or confidence.

We must know the testimony or assurance of some one else, or we can not believe. The better we know anything the deeper will be our conviction or persuasion concerning that matter. It is not necessary that we

should be able to fully comprehend and analyze a thing before we believe, but we must know something of it, something must have been told us concerning it, ere we can believe.

Then, too, the mind must consent to accept it as true. Having heard about a matter we can either accept it or reject it. When we believe we accept it as true.

And lastly we confide or trust in the declaration made to us. This last part is especially prominent when a promise has been made to us concerning some future gift or benefit. We then trust in that promise, we rest assured that what has been declared will actually occur. This trusting rests in the conviction that the person declaring a matter to us is reliable, that he can and will do as he assures. Thus a child trusts in the word of his father, he confides in his father, he depends on the integrity of his father.

Three parts of faith are, therefore, knowledge, consent and trust.

What we are very desirous of emphasizing here is that faith is always in a person in whom we have some measure of confidence. We would not easily believe the word of a notorious falsifier, nor would we hasten to accept the word of a stranger. There must be some degree of confidence in a person who makes a statement to us, and because of our trust in him we believe his word, we accept his testimony.

Is faith the action of one faculty of the soul, as e. g., of the understanding or of the will, or is it the action of the whole soul?

The whole soul believes, every faculty is active. The one indivisible soul knows and confides, believes the witness of a reliable person.

The soul can not desire or love what it does not

know, and it can not be indifferent to anything that it is well persuaded of. Concerning a mere speculation the will of man might be irresponsive, but to believe a matter of any consequence to us means that the understanding apprehends the truth and passes judgment on its importance, and that the will determines the attitude of the soul towards the matter. In so far as faith includes the act of cognition, of apprehending the truth, it is of course an act of the understanding, but consent and trust are especially actions of the will. And when the will has determined to confide, the affections respond, they are aroused and show the interest of the soul. Thus the whole soul is engaged.

Of how many kinds of faith does the Bible speak?

Of four kinds: *Historical, Miraculous, Temporary, and Saving Faith.*

What is historical faith?

A bare assent to the truth; necessary, but not sufficient. It is so called because it believes the truth of the Bible as a fact of history is believed. A historical believer takes no deep, active interest in the truth for his own salvation.

James 2: 19: "Thou believest that God is one: thou doest well; the demons also believe, and shudder."

What is a miraculous faith?

A strong persuasion that a miracle will be performed by us or on us. This faith was especially shown when Jesus was on earth in the flesh, and by the Apostles when they performed miracles. It is possible that a person may have miraculous faith and still lack the grace of saving faith.

Matt. 9: 22: "But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, 'Daughter, be of good comfort; thy

faith hath made thee whole.' And the woman was made whole from that hour."

Matt. 21: 21: "Jesus answered and said unto them, 'Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do what is done to the fig-tree, but even if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou taken up and cast into the sea, it shall be done.' " Acts 3: 16.

I Cor. 13: 2: "And if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing."

What is temporary faith?

It is a receiving of the word straightway with joy, often caused by artificial methods.

What is lacking in a person having temporary faith?

A regenerated heart and therefore godly sorrow for sin and absolute surrender to Christ.

The name temporary faith is derived from the parable of the Sower, wherein Jesus describes those who are like seed sown on rocky places, and declares they endure only for a time.

Matt. 13:20, 21: "And he that was sown upon the rocky places, this is he that heareth the word, and straightway with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for a while; and when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, straightway he stumbleth."

This temporary faith may last a shorter or longer time, sometimes till death, sometimes its true nature will be sooner discovered, as Jesus says in the days of persecution or tribulation, or it may and often does fail when the stimulus and excitement which has produced it is taken away. An example of temporary faith is found in the history of Demas, who was once a companion of Paul, Col. 4: 14, later he forsook him, "having loved this present world." II Tim. 4: 10.

In what does temporary faith differ from saving faith?

Jesus says they who endure for a while have not root in themselves.

In this their principal difference from those having saving faith is found. True believers have the true root of faith in the depths of their hearts, implanted within them when they were born again of the Holy Spirit. Temporary believers lack this true principle of faith, for they were never regenerated; their faith does not therefore proceed from the depth of their hearts, and control the whole soul, but is much more a temporary affection of the emotions; it is not accompanied by sincere sorrow for sin as saving faith is, but straightway, when the emotions have been stirred, it receiveth the promise and assurances of the Bible with joy, it is sure of salvation without having forsaken the old sinful life, it applies and appropriates something to itself that does not belong to it. A peculiarity of temporary faith is that it is intent wholly on its own enjoyment and salvation, but cares little or nothing for the honor of God; it is selfish.

Temporary faith differs from saving faith therefore in character as well as in duration.

When is temporary faith most likely to be found?

In stirring times, as in periods of war, famine and pests, and especially during some man-made revivals of religion when people are agitated and excited but not deeply convicted, not changed in heart.

What is saving faith?

To this question various answers are given by different writers. To be sure, saving faith is the same in all true believers, and only one definition can really be given of it. The variations in the describing of saving

faith are caused by the fact that one will look at it in a broader sense than another, though both mean the same. In the broadest sense having faith is believing with all the interests of the heart the teachings of God's word.

Faith in general we saw was the believing of the testimony of a reliable witness. In saving faith the soul believes the testimony of God's word, and it does this with all the interest of the heart. In a more particular sense saving faith is the experimental knowing of the Savior and the full surrender of the heart forever to the Person of the Savior.

When the sinner believes the testimony of God's word he knows himself to be lost in sin, he also knows from the word that Jesus Christ is an exactly appropriate Savior, and he accepts the promises and invitations that urge him to come to Christ for complete salvation. He accepts and obeys in faith the direction of the word which bids him believe in Christ and be saved. When we truly believe the word of God we of course believe in him who stands back of his word and is ever ready to fulfill every promise it contains, who is the great subject of whom the word speaks and in whom the word centralizes,—and that is Jesus Christ. We are therefore ever told to believe in Jesus Christ. Our only hope for eternity is in what Christ has done, now has, and now is, for his people.

A very good description which brings out the above stated difference of saving faith in a broader and a narrower sense is found in the Westminster Confession of Faith:

Chap. 14: 11: "By this faith, a Christian believeth to be true whatsoever is revealed in the word, for the authority of God himself speaketh therein; and acteth

differently upon that which each particular passage thereof containeth; yielding obedience to the commands, trembling at the threatenings, and embracing the promises of God for this life and that which is to come. But the principal acts of saving faith are, accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, eternal life, by virtue of the covenant of grace."

The definition of our Heidelberg Catechism is very good. "True faith is not only a certain knowledge, whereby I hold for truth all that God has revealed to us in his word, but also an assured confidence, which the Holy Ghost works by the gospel, in my heart; that not only to others, but to me also, remission of sin, everlasting righteousness and salvation, are freely given by God, merely of grace, only for the sake of Christ's merits." Question 21.

In this definition there are two cardinal words: knowledge and confidence. Faith is knowledge of God's word and confidence that sin is forgiven for Christ's sake.

The knowledge here meant is an experimental knowledge. In this the knowledge of saving faith differs from the knowledge of historical faith. In historical faith the truth is also known, but only as a theory which is learned and stored in the memory, and this does not seriously affect the heart and conduct of life. But in saving faith there is a deep interest of heart in what has been learned and the experience of life bears out the teachings of God's word.

The true believer has been born again of the Holy Spirit; as a result of this his mind has been enlightened, he understands the truth better than before, and he appreciates its value of his own welfare. For him

God's word is a lamp for his feet and a light on his pathway.

And whenever the truth is thus known there will follow a hearty confidence in Jesus Christ. All true believers have no more confidence in themselves, they look to the Savior for security, they hunger and thirst for the fulness of Christ. To do this is very difficult for sinful human nature, which is very self-righteous and seeks to be self-sufficient; and one of the greatest obstacles for a sinner in coming to faith in Christ is that in doing this he must give up all trust in self, abandon all hope of taking care of himself, to trust wholly in the Savior. But for all who do thus surrender, it is true, according to the promise of Scripture, that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, and the Holy Spirit will sooner or later apply the assurance of this fact to their hearts.

True faith therefore is a certain knowledge of God and of his promises revealed to us, of which Jesus Christ is the great center with whom we must be in living contact, and a hearty confidence that all our sins are forgiven for Christ's sake. This last item, the confidence that all our sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, may also be considered a fruit of faith. The soul trusts in Christ, in his Person and work, and as a result of this trust in Christ comes the conviction: my sins are forgiven for Christ's sake. Faith and the assurance of pardon in answer to faith is not equally strong in every believer. The distinction has been made between a seeking faith and an assured faith, an assured faith having the hearty confidence of full acceptance and pardon through Christ, while a seeking faith still seeks to become sure of these facts. Seeking faith is true faith, since it confides entirely in Christ and no longer in self, but it lacks the

sweet enjoyment of positively knowing at all times that Christ is the Savior of the soul. In the answer of our Catechism an assured believer is speaking, who has a hearty confidence that all his sins are forgiven for Christ's sake.

This answer of our Catechism is especially a protest against the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church, which teaches that in true faith there is not involved an assurance or trust on the part of the believer that he shall be saved. According to the Roman Church the assurance of salvation is hardly attainable in this life. Roman Catholics even speak of an unformed faith, when a person simply declares to believe what his church believes, without having a true conception of the truth for himself. But this is merely a blind following of the priests. In contrast to this theory of Rome the Reformers taught that in true faith there must be a personal appropriation of Christ, and where this is done there will be more or less confidence that sin is forgiven for Christ's sake. The stronger the faith in Christ the greater the assurance.

There is no doubting in faith, but there may be doubting in the believer.

John 5:24: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life."

Who works this faith in us?

The Holy Spirit, through the word of God.

Eph. 2:8: "For by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."

Saving faith is the result of regeneration of the heart by the Holy Spirit, who dwells in those born again and

turns them in hunger and thirst to Jesus Christ. This the Spirit does through the agency of the word and according to the teaching and examples of the word.

No one can or will of himself ever come to true faith, for we are all by nature dead through trespasses and sins, and true faith is the action of spiritual life in us.

Can true faith ever be lost again?

No, impossibly, for God preserves it. As far as the believer himself is concerned he might lose it if left to himself, and to their own consciousness and enjoyment it seems to many they have lost it, but true believers are kept by the power of our faithful, covenant God.

John 10:28: "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand."

Why are many believers weak in faith and consequently lacking certainty of salvation?

Our answer to this must be twofold; from our side weakness of faith may be caused by:

1. Slothful and careless christian life, and thus grieving the Spirit.

2. Ignorance of the true nature of faith. Many well meaning souls are too introspective. They look too exclusively within, so that their faith and hope is graduated by their feelings and the degree of evidence of regeneration which they find in their experience. This process will rarely lead to assurance. Remember we must look to Christ, beyond ourselves. It is well to sincerely examine ourselves and thus become acquainted with our sinfulness and wretchedness, but then we must look away for rescue to the Savior who died and rose again for the salvation of his people.

On the other hand remember that faith is a gift of God and that the Spirit grants a stronger faith to some

than to others. All have not the same capacity. Prayer for more faith is therefore always necessary.

The true assurance of saving faith is known by such marks as these:

It begets unfeigned humility, I Cor. 15:10: "But by the grace of God I am what I am."

It leads to ever increasing diligence in practical religion, Ps. 51:12, 13: "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with a willing spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee."

It leads to sincere self-examination and a desire to be searched and directed by God, Ps. 139:23, 24: "Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me, and know my thoughts; And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

It leads to constant desire after nearer likeness and intimacy with the Lord, I John 3:3: "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."

How can we increase in faith?

1. By being very careful to live in prayer and obedience before God, and by consciously abiding in Christ. Apart from Christ we can do nothing. John 15:5.

2. By considering the grounds of assurance. They are:

- a. The invitations and promises of God.
- b. The faithfulness and unchangeable love of God.
- c. The merit of the satisfaction of Christ for the sins of his people, and the constant intercession of Christ for us in heaven.

d. The testimony of the Spirit to our hearts. Rom. 8:14-17.

THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

JUSTIFICATION

What is justification?

Justification is that gracious act of God whereby he pardons the guilt of sin and adopts as his children and heirs unto eternal life, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone.

The great aim and purpose of all religious systems is the restoration of the sinner into the divine favor. Man everywhere recognizes that he is a sinner and that he is out of harmony with God. When his conscience is aroused by the conviction of sin and by the thought of a future judgment, man seeks in some way to regain God's favor and an acceptable relation toward him. Among the heathen of every age were found altars and sacrifices and ceremonies of a religious nature, all intended to win the good will of their gods. By their altars and ceremonies they acknowledged their wrong relation to God and their need of restoration into divine favor. The true nature of this guilt, the christians have learned from the word of God. And they have also learned the only possible way of acceptance into God's favor; it is by being justified through the merits of Jesus Christ.

Rom. 3:24: "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

John 1:12: "But as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."

In treating this subject of justification we believe we can most clearly include all essentials under the four points of *the nature, the ground, the means, and the effect* of justification.

NATURE OF JUSTIFICATION

What is the nature of justification?

It is first of all a judicial act of God, that is, an act of God as judge. The sinner appears before the tribunal of God, as guilty of breaking God's laws, and as eternally condemned by the justice of God because of his guilt.

Now when God justifies the sinner he imputes to the sinner the righteousness of Christ, that is, he credits or puts to the account of the sinner the merits of Jesus' obedience, and on the ground of this obedience the sinner is pardoned and restored as a child of God forever.

The root meaning of the word justification is to make just or righteous. But in its secondary and scriptural sense it means to count or pronounce just, to declare that a person is not guilty but righteous. The opposite of justification is condemnation. This last is the act of a judge in a court of justice, so also is justification a judicial act.

All people can stand in only one of two relations towards God's law; they are either guilty or righteous, guilty if they have broken the law, righteous if they have kept the law. All have broken the law, all stand guilty. To his people God imputes the righteousness of another, of the Savior, and now declares them righteous.

From this description it will be seen that justification does not change a person's inner heart or character, it changes his legal relation before God; it does not remove the pollution of sin, the internal corruption of the heart, as regeneration and sanctification do, but justification makes right the relation towards God's law, and if the law no longer condemns us, we shall not perish in sin.

The controversy between the Protestants and the

Roman Catholics turned largely on the nature of justification. The Protestants used the word in a forensic or legal sense alone, the Roman Catholics used the word in both a moral and judicial sense. The Roman Church defines justification "to be not only the remission of sins, but also the renewal and sanctification of the inner man." According to the Church of Rome, therefore, justification consists in remission of sin and a change of moral character produced by the infusion of righteousness. But this Roman Catholic view confuses justification with sanctification, which are two distinct acts of God's grace.

Among Protestants there are also many who seek to give an exclusive moral sense to the word justification, depriving it of its legal meaning. They are those who hold the moral-influence theory of the atonement of Christ, as if Christ had died merely to make a good moral impression on us for our benefit, and not to satisfy the justice of God for us. These teachers take the element of guilt out of sin, and thus the element of pardon out of salvation. Men need cure and not pardon. Sin brings suffering; help the sinner to improve himself to the end that he may not suffer. We go to heaven because we are holy, not because we are righteous through Christ. This doctrine, taught in many Protestant pulpits is worse than that of Rome, for, false as the Romish doctrine of justification is, it proceeds on the recognition of the guilt of sin and the need of expiatory character of the atonement of Christ, while the moral-influence theory of some protestants denies these cardinal doctrines.

What sins does God pardon when he justifies his people?

All sins, past, present and future; original and actual. In consequence of the crediting of Christ's right-

eousness to us the believer is free from the condemnation of all sin. He is henceforth counted in Christ. The enjoyment of the sense of pardon is not, however, always the privilege of the christian; by grieving the Holy Spirit through sin and by losing sight of Christ he may be very doubtful as to his pardon. The believer is also subject to the suffering consequent to sin in this world, but this suffering is not a penalty for sin, but a chastisement designed for correction and improvement.

What is the second part of justification?

Adoption to be children and heirs of God.

Every person is naturally under the demands of the covenant of works. To gain eternal life according to this covenant he would have to lead a perfect life; but this is impossible at present, for we are all born in sin and live in sin. But what we can not do Christ has done for us. He has taken away the penalty of sin not only, but has also by his active obedience fulfilled the demands of the law for us as a condition to gain eternal life. When God justifies us he counts all of Christ's merits to our credit, and reckons us in Christ. For Christ's sake we are therefore also adopted as heirs of eternal life. All the promises of the covenant of grace accrue to the justified. Christ and his people share together. We are not merely forgiven and then told to earn eternal life by our own works, but are made children of God forever.

Rom. 5:17: "For if, by the trespass of the one, death reigned through the one, much more shall they that receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one, even Jesus Christ."

Rom. 8:15: "But ye received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God;

and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ."

Eph. 1:5-7: "Having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will; to the praise of the glory of his grace, which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved; in whom we have the redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace."

Notice Paul declares in these verses that God has bestowed grace on his people in Christ, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of our trespasses. In verse 3 we read "God has blessed believers with spiritual blessings in Christ."

From eternity, before the foundation of the world, God has bestowed on us all needed blessings for our complete salvation in Christ. All grace needed has been objectively given to Christ for us, and through the blood or the death of Christ the blessings of grace were actually purchased and an indisputable title to all grace secured for us.

So objectively our redemption is complete in Christ. In due time God gives to each of his people the blessings reserved in Christ for them.

GROUND OF JUSTIFICATION

What is the ground of justification?

The only ground is the righteousness of Jesus Christ. God never declares any one just unless the law is satisfied, and nothing less than absolutely perfect righteousness can fulfil the law. This Christ as our representative has rendered, and his merits are the sole legal ground of justification. There is nothing in us to which God has regard when he justifies us, no inherent righteousness,

no faith, or good works. Christ died "the just for the unjust," he came "to give his life a ransom for many," "he was made sin for us," "made a curse for us."

Phil. 3:9: "And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, even that which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ."

Paul complains of his own people because they seek to be justified by their own righteousness; "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Rom. 10.

Why can not our good works be the ground of our justification?

1. Our good works are not perfect. The law demands perfect obedience. And though by the grace of God we should obey, this act of obedience at one time does not atone for the disobedience of another time. Gal. 3:10, 11.

2. If we are justified by works, Christ has died in vain. Gal. 2:21.

3. The good works of God's people are due to the Holy Spirit in them, therefore the credit for these works is due to God alone.

Good works follow but do not gain justification.

Eph. 2:8-10: "For by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, that no man should glory. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them."

Since then we are delivered from our misery, merely of grace, through Christ, without any merit of ours, why must we still do good works?

Because Christ, having redeemed and delivered us by his blood, also renews us by his Holy Spirit, after his own image; that so we may testify by the whole of our conduct, our gratitude to God for his blessings, and that he may be praised by us; also, that every one may be assured in himself of his faith, by the fruits thereof; and that, by our godly conversation others may be gained to Christ. *Heidellb. Catech. Ques. 86.*

MEANS OF JUSTIFICATION

What is the means of securing justification?

Faith in Jesus Christ alone.

Scripture declares we are justified by faith or through faith, but never on account of faith. Faith is not the ground or cause that merits justification, it is the means of appropriating Christ and his righteousness, and on the ground of the righteousness thus appropriated by faith we are justified. Justification is a gift of God's infinite grace, faith is our receiving of the gift. The more active faith is, therefore the more will there be the enjoyment of justification.

That God should have ordained faith for this particular office of being the instrument of justification is not an arbitrary appointment, but is most wise and necessary. The nature of our own heart and the nature of salvation commends faith as the only instrument to receive justification. Faith is reliance, a deep sense of dependence on God, it looks away for the soul's necessities to God, and it therefore also ascribes all honor to God. The purpose of salvation is the glory of God. Faith seeks the glory of God and ends in praising God. Thus faith is eminently fit to be the means of justification.

Rom. 4:3-5: "For what saith the Scripture? And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh, the reward is not reckoned as of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness."

When does justification occur?

According to the above description of justification it occurs in answer to faith, it thus follows faith and occurs in time. This is the most usual and popular presentation, and looks at justification from the human standpoint, from which the Bible generally views it. Many Reformed theologians, however, speak of justification from eternity, by which they mean that God has from eternity looked down upon his people in Christ as justified, that is, as pardoned and as his heirs. They view justification from God's side, and declare that God has not first justified his people when they prayed to him in faith, but that he has from eternity determined to look upon his people as being in a righteous state before him. Later when he has given faith to his people he makes known to their own minds that they are justified. This later is then called justification from a subjective or human point of view.*

They who favor speaking of justification from eternity usually distinguish four stages or steps: 1. Justification from eternity in the tribunal of God; 2. Justification as realized in the resurrection of Christ; 3. The active justification, that is, the application of the merits of Christ and the implanting of new life; 4. The more

* The Westminster Confession, Chap. XI, IV states "God did, from all eternity, decree to justify all the elect; and Christ did, in the fulness of time, die for their sins, and rise again for their justification; nevertheless they are not justified, until the Holy Spirit doth in due time, actually apply Christ unto them." H.B.

passive justification, that is, justification as it is appropriated by faith before the tribunal of one's own conscience in conversion.

Do all agree with us that we are justified by faith alone?

No, some declare that works must be added to faith. Sometimes we read the same language in regard to this subject as we employ, but it is evident on close examination that very different things are meant. The Romanist also says we are justified by faith. But what does he mean? He has two justifications and two faiths. The first justification is the removal of original sin, which occurs in baptism. A person must believe that the Church is a divine institution for saving men. He therefore comes to be baptized by the Church and receives thereby the power of spiritual life in the soul, which renders the soul inherently holy or just. This receiving of baptism with its regenerating influence the Romanist must do in faith, faith merely as intellectual assent, and this is the predisposing cause of justification. After a man is thus rendered holy by the first justification, his faith must work in love, and on the ground of these works of love he receives eternal life, this is the second justification. Romanists make faith to have a twofold sense: as mere intellectual assent to what the Church says, and as synonymous with love.

Wesley, the father of Methodism, expressed himself thus: "In asserting salvation by faith we mean this: (1) That pardon (salvation begun) is received by faith producing works. (2) That holiness (salvation continued) is faith working by love. (3) That heaven (salvation finished) is the reward of this faith."

Some liberals today, though they reject the atonement of Christ, still use the expression: salvation is by

faith. In explaining what they mean by the phrase, they declare faith is the secret of all success. Have faith in a cause if you wish to succeed. Faith saves us, because by it we overcome sin and are stimulated to christian works. This soul-deceiving theory shows how the same words can be used to cover most any idea and mislead the unsuspecting.

EFFECTS OF JUSTIFICATION

What are the effects of justification?

That the justified are no longer subject to condemnation, the anger of God is removed, and his love is shown to their hearts. They now have peace with God, and joy in the Holy Spirit. They are also by the gratitude of their hearts moved to a holy life. Sanctification will follow justification.

The effect of pardon of sin through grace alone can never be a licentious life, as some urge against the biblical doctrine. They say, if God accepts the chief of sinners as well as the most moral man, on the simple condition of faith in Christ what is the need of good works? Why not get justified and then indulge in sin?*

Paul met this objection in his day and answered it in Rom. 6 and 7. He answered thus: "Salvation is deliverance from sin, how can men be delivered from sin that they may live in it. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein."

Again Paul says the very act of faith that secures

* The people here referred to are known as Antinomians, which means "against the law." Traces of their views are found in the N. T. in 2 Peter 3:16, 1 Cor. 5:1-6, and most likely were part of the doctrines of the Nicolaitans mentioned in Revelation. The "Libertines" who appeared in the Netherlands about 1525, and were combated by Calvin were Antinomians. The "Ranters" of England, mentioned by Bunyan and Mrs. Ann Hutchinson and others of New England, promoted the same views. H. B.

our justification secures also our sanctification. We take Christ as our Redeemer from the power of sin as well as from its guilt. If we are partakers of the benefits of his death we are also partakers of his life. If any one lives in sin he proclaims himself an unbeliever.

Our Savior as Priest died to save us from the curse of sin and therefore we are pardoned. He also as Priest continues his intercession for the justified, and sends them the Holy Spirit to comfort and lead them in God's way. "Faith, if it have not works, is dead in itself." James 2:17.

If good works are neglected the believer loses the comfort and assurances of justification. The believer is delivered from the law as a condition to gain eternal life, but not as a rule of life. He since believing begins to truly obey the law. Rom. 7:4.

SANCTIFICATION

To what are they, who are justified, called?

To lead a holy life unto the glory of God.

In justification, as we have seen from the former chapter, a sinner's legal position before God is changed. Before he was guilty and worthy of condemnation. Through the imputed righteousness of Christ, which he accepted in faith he is henceforth free from guilt and condemnation. But he is not free from the power of sin in his heart and life. He is justified, but he is not holy. His constant aim must be to become holy, to be freed from the corrupting power of sin and to devote himself in loving obedience to God. The process according to which this is accomplished is called sanctification.

At regeneration the soul's new life began, a better, but not a sinless, life; a new nature was given to the soul, but the old nature was not entirely destroyed and removed. A constant struggle will therefore result in

the christian, his life will be a warfare. The old nature must be conquered by the new, and the new is to grow ever more in conformity to Jesus Christ. The soul was not only sick, but dead, God made it alive, now follows the putting off of the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and the putting on of the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Eph. 4:24.

What definition can we therefore give of sanctification?

Sanctification is the work of God's grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and to live unto righteousness. *Shorter Catech.*

The words translated sanctify and holy in our Bible originally mean to clean, to purify, and to separate or consecrate to God.

These two ideas it is necessary to put together that we may appreciate the meaning of sanctification. To cleanse from sin, to turn from the common and the low, is one side of sanctification; to devote and consecrate to God is the other side. Mere turning from sin is not sanctification, there must go with it a whole hearted devotion to God.

A good understanding of sanctification may be gained by recalling what we said about conversion, that it is a turning from sin in hearty repentance, and turning to Christ in saving faith. This conversion is really the beginning of sanctification, and ever after the believer must turn farther from sin in hearty repentance and turn more towards Christ in faith, that he may increase in holiness of life. This continued turning is our sanctification.

Our Catechism, like most all older theological works, describes sanctification as being the same as

conversion. In answer to the question: "Of how many parts does the true conversion of man consist?" it answers: "Of two parts: of the mortification of the old and the quickening of the new man." Ques. 88.

This mortification of the old man and quickening of the new man is a process, not an act that is finished; and this is true of sanctification, it is a daily and repeated mortifying and vivifying. When we mortify, we deaden, kill our sinful self, thereby become dead to the world. As a corpse can not respond to others, has lost all contact with the world, so would a soul dead to the world be out of contact with the sin in the world. This mortifying of self is necessary to give place to the increasing life of holiness, which is of the Holy Spirit. We are not expected to first mortify ourselves in our own powers, for it is not our own strength that conquers the evil in us, it is the new life that expels and destroys sin and death in us. Evil habits and affections are less overcome by thinking of them and fighting them directly, than by drawing the mind to and captivating the heart by whatsoever things are of God, are holy, true, pure and of good report. "Walk in the Spirit and ye shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh."

Is sanctification possible for everybody?

No, only for those born again of the Holy Spirit. Remember sanctification is different from moral reformation, which is possible for all through the common grace of God. Reformation need not come from a new nature of the heart, but sanctification can alone come from the life of God in us. Reformation is like cleaning the outward garments. Sanctification means heart cleansing and consecration to God.

Is sanctification a work of God or of man?

It is both. God begins and continues and must com-

plete it. He begins it in regeneration and conversion, and continues it through the upholding of his life in the heart and the inspiring of the soul to walk in God's ways, and he completes it entirely at death, when he frees the soul of all sin and glorifies it. God does not implant a germ of holy life and leave it to fight for its existence against opposing influences. He supports his life in us, and all holy desires and every gain in sanctification is due to God first of all. Objectively considered sanctification is the work of God, of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, particularly of the Holy Spirit. But we must also look at sanctification subjectively, from our point of view. It is also a work of man. The Holy Spirit sanctifies, and by his power and moving we are to sanctify ourselves. We are to coöperate with God, yield to and obey the Spirit in his desire for our holiness. We must actively fight sin in ourselves, must lay aside every sin that we may run the christian race, must put on the whole armor of God to battle against evil. It is a very one-sided view of christian life that allows the believer to be passive and does not stir him to strenuous devotion to the right. We are not to wait on God alone, but are also to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. Pray and labor. Sanctification is not only a privilege, it is a duty.

The condition we must fulfill to advance in sanctification is that we do good works. Being born again we can do good works. The heart is good in principle, and from the new heart alone good in God's sight can come. And it is absolutely necessary that the christian should do good works in order to grow in a holy life. Only by using the new powers God has given him will he increase in strength. No life can grow that can not express itself, that remains hid in the dark, only by giving expression

to itself in the light of the day, can it grow. Good works are the fruit of the new life, and God has conditioned our growth in grace on our bringing forth fruits to his honor and glory. But these works are not done in our own power. God causes us to do good in his strength. No honor is therefore due to us for them, and they can not be the ground of our salvation.

The definition of our Catechism as to what good works are, is: "Good works proceed from a true faith, are performed according to the law of God, and to his glory."

Eph. 2:10: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them."

Col. 1:10: "That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God."

I Thess. 4:3: "And this is the will of God, even your sanctification."

Eph. 1:4: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."

John 17:17; I Cor. 6:11; I Cor. 13; Gal. 2:20; II Tim. 2:11; Heb. 13:21.

Is there not a great deal of vagueness and indefiniteness as to the Christian's own part in the work of sanctification?

Yes, indeed, to the great detriment of spiritual growth of the Christian himself, and to the injury of the cause of the Master.

Vagueness and indefiniteness often result from lack of insight as to our christian calling. A clear perception of duty, a deep conviction as to what we must be and

do will help sincere souls very much, will give direction to efforts in the proper ways.

As an aid to clearness of perception of what is required to grow in sanctification, we wish to call attention to the three offices of the christian, the *prophetic*, the *priestly* and the *kingly office*.

A good understanding of our calling might be gained in other ways, but for our purpose we believe a clear view of the work assigned to us as christians in each of our offices will aid us very much.

As we know, Christ means anointed. Christians are also anointed with the Holy Spirit, and they are now privileged to share in their Master's work. No one may expect to be happy as a christian unless he sincerely strives to fulfill the offices of the christian in dependence on and in obedience unto Christ.

One christian has more talents than another, and more may justly be expected of one than of the other, but all have some measure of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and our joy and progress will depend on the readiness of our service with these gifts.

1. *As a prophet* the christian is to be a confessor of Christ. To confess Christ means to declare our unity or agreement with Christ. To be able to do this we must know the mind or will of Christ as declared in the Scripture, must love this word and be minded as Christ is, then will we confess his name.

The christian has learned the truth, has been enlightened by the Holy Spirit, has the truth settled in his conviction, and has surrendered to the demands of the truth. If he will declare this heartfelt conviction he is a confessor, a prophet.

The confessor is to declare and apply the truth in every sphere of life, in everyday occurrences. In the

home, society and state, as well as in the Church our agreement with Christ must be evident.

Christ is the Light of the world, so are we, after being enlightened by Christ. We must declare to the world the will of God.

This is not the calling of the ministers of the Word alone, but of every christian. Therefore let us study the Word of God that we may be better confessors. Study in dependence on the Spirit, in prayer, in holy zeal for the honor of Christ, and bravely declare the will of Christ to all.

Matt. 10:32, 33: "Every one therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven."

2. *As a priest* the christian must present himself a living sacrifice of thankfulness to God.

Christ as Priest gave himself a living sacrifice to God as an atonement for the sin of his people. The christian now needs no longer to bring sacrifices for sin, but he must present himself a living sacrifice of thankfulness to God. He needs no priest to stand between him and his God as in the O. T. day, for when our great High Priest died the veil of the temple was rent in twain and the way into the holy of holies, that is the presence of God, is open for all his people. Every christian is a priest now, anointed to bring sacrifices and to pray. The sacrifice is to be himself and all he has. Before he was a priest unto self, Satan and the world. When converted he surrenders all to God. In denial of self-will the christian henceforth prays that God's will be done and God's name hallowed. In prayer and song and praise he brings to

God the sacrifice of thanksgiving, bringing the same also by conducting all of life's actions to God's glory.

And as God blesses you with earthly goods, devote a fixed portion of these to the kingdom of God. Give liberally to the support of the Church and missions and charity. Give cheerfully as a sacrifice of thanksgiving.

Furthermore as a priest a christian must intercede, lift up his prayer in behalf of others.

Let him consider the needs of others and present these to God in prayer. There are many who can not pray, for whom God is a stranger; if we are privileged to enter the holy of holies, let us enter there with the burdens of others as well as our own. Pray for saints and sinners, and particularly that God may pour out on this sinful world his Holy Spirit. Blessed will you be according to your readiness in sacrifice and intercession. See Rom. 12:1, 2.

3. *As a king* the christian must govern and fight.

The citizens of the kingdom of Christ are not serfs or slaves, they have been made free and are kings under Christ. They are not absolute monarchs, as the children of the world desire to be, which very desire is their doom. The christians are constitutional kings. The Bible is their constitution and law book. According to this constitution the christian must govern himself, his thoughts, words, and deeds, and everything else over which his influence is exerted.

And that God's kingdom may come the christian must fight all that is opposed to this kingdom. Satan, our own evil nature, and the sins and temptations of the world are to be fought and removed. This is to be done by word and deed.

Hold high the authority and will of God.

Remember, however, there is no possibility to rule

either self or others, except we first learn obedience at the feet of Christ.

The more God rules us the more we are free.

Abandonment of self-will is the requirement to gain royal dignity. And in respect to our whole christian life let us remember that we must not only keep before us our needs and privileges, but also our calling and our duties. Often more attention is given to what we need than to what we must be and do. In Christ there is provision for our needs, and we are most highly privileged if we are christians, but these privileges also mean great duties. Deliverance must be followed by gratitude.

What is an indispensable requisite for sanctification?

Fellowship with Jesus Christ through faith. Upon this we can not lay too much emphasis. Christ is made unto us sanctification. I Cor. 1:30. He is the only one who has earned our sanctification, to him has been given the Holy Spirit that he might sanctify us, and we are thus dependent on him. We must have an unbounded trust in him, and abide in loving communion with him. Lose sight of Christ and soon our faith will waver and sanctification be arrested.

John 15:1, 2: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh it away; and every branch that beareth fruit, he cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit. Vs. 4. Abide in me and I in you. As the branch can not bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in me. Vs. 5. I am the vine, ye are the branches; He that abideth in me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit, for apart from me ye can do nothing, etc."

John 6:57: "As the living Father sent me, and I

live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me."

See I Cor. 6:13-20: "The believer is a member of Christ's body, the temple of the Holy Spirit."

What means has God given for the increase of sanctification?

Especially his word and the sacraments. The word is intended as encouragement and a guide to sanctification. Without the word we would often be misguided and discouraged. The divine loveliness of God presented in the word is the object of our love, his goodness of our gratitude, his promises of our trust, his judgment of our awe, and his commandments exercise in us the spirit of obedience.

I Pet. 2: 2: "As new born babes, long for the spiritual milk which is without guile, that ye may grow thereby unto salvation." II Pet. 1: 4.

The sacraments are means to sanctification, because they not merely represent certain benefits of Christ, but also confer these benefits to those who worthily receive them. If faith be active the Holy Spirit grants through the use of the sacraments an increase in faith, and thereby in sanctification.

The word and the sacraments some have called the outward means, and faith the inward means. The inward must use the outward means.

In this connection we would strongly urge the need of prayer to increase in sanctification. The best saints are those who pray most. Decline in prayer means decline in sanctification. What breathing is for the lungs, prayer is for the new heart.

I Thess. 5:17, 18: "Pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

(At the end of this article on Sanctification we will give a special discussion on prayer.)

Is perfect sanctification attainable by believers in this life?

No, this is reserved for heaven. We are to strive for perfect holiness, and we can ever reach higher degrees of holiness, for the most holy has but a small beginning of obedience compared with the perfection in heaven. What God has given is perfect, therefore John declares: "Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because his seed abideth in him; and he can not sin, because he is begotten of God." I John 3:9. But there is much left in the believer that is not begotten of God, therefore Paul cries out: "For I know that in me, that is my flesh, dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but to do that which is good is not, etc." Rom. 7: 18.

Perfectionists make the claim of being wholly sanctified, freed from sin. Our objections to their theories are:

1. No saints of Scripture were perfectly free from sin. Paul even cried out: "Wretched man that I am." And to the Philippians he wrote: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which I also am apprehended of Christ Jesus." Phil. 3: 12.

Paul's humility makes the claims of Perfectionists seem presumptuous.

- I John 1: 8: "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."

2. The fifth petition of the Lord's prayer is: "forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." The Perfectionist has no need of this prayer.

3. Christian experience is opposed to this doctrine. Are the thoughts, words and deeds ever in perfect conformity to the law?

4. Perfectionist theories are based on a false view of the high demands of the law, or on a false view of sin.

Can sanctification ever be entirely lost?

No, the Bible teaches the perseverance of saints.

The Bible uses very strong language to warn Christians from sin and to exhort them to overcome till the end, but this does not mean that they can utterly fall from grace. God speaks to his people as intelligent beings, who must ever be on their guard against the wiles of Satan, and run to win the prize of their high calling, but while God warns his people he also gives them grace to persevere.

All do not agree with us here, however. They who teach that man has a free will to accept salvation, must also believe that he can lose his relation towards the Savior according to his free will. Arminians, Roman Catholics and Lutherans teach that grace can be utterly lost. A person can by neglecting grace or by grieving the Spirit, in living in sin inconsistent with justifying faith, and dying in the same, be lost in perdition.

To this we strongly object, and believe that all true believers will be saved. Spiritual life may languish, but it never dies.

Our reasons are:

1. Scripture declares: "There is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus." "He that believeth hath eternal life." "We have passed from death unto life." "Whom he calls, he justifies, and whom he justifies he glorifies." These statements could not be made if ultimate salvation were uncertain.

2. Perseverance of the saints follows from the doctrine of election. God has chosen some to everlasting life. He has chosen them to be saved through faith. Faith is the fruit of regeneration, and regeneration is

the proof of election. A living faith is the guarantee of election. "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

The believer is kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. God's purpose can not be frustrated. Phil. 1:6: "He who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

John 10: 28: "I will give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

Rom. 8:38: "I am persuaded that nothing shall separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus."

This doctrine of perseverance of the saints is very precious and comforting, but it may not encourage indolence and pride. Along with this doctrine comes the exhortation to "give diligence to make your calling and election sure," and the caution, "Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall."

Complete falling from grace is not possible for those once adopted as sons of God, but there may be serious decline of sanctification through neglect of exercising faith and through disobedience. For the believer's own consciousness it may seem as though he had lost all grace. If he be truly converted, he will, however, return in repentance and faith to the fellowship of Jesus Christ. To cause him to return God uses various ways. Sometimes he draws him back through the tender wooing of the Holy Spirit, sometimes he uses outward circumstances to urge him back, as e. g., the rod of affliction, disappointment and losses and bereavements.

It is also the experience of Christian life that often the believer thinks his sanctification is not advancing when it perhaps is making excellent progress. Before sanctification there was little or no knowledge of sin,

but as sanctification deepens and spreads through the whole man, so does the sense of sin spread and deepen with it. Often when outward transgressions are being overcome, the inward sense of corruption increases. This may worry the mind of the sincere soul, but it is a good sign of healthy growth. The more holy we become, the more intolerant we are of evil.

PRAYER

What is prayer?

"Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies." *Shorter Catech.*

Phil. 4: 6: "In everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God."

John 5: 14: "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us."

From the above definition of prayer it will be seen that prayer is more than supplicating and beseeching for God's mercies. Prayer has rightly been called communing with God, and as the soul communes with God in prayer, it pours out to God in worship the fulness of the heart. As we do this, we adore God because of his greatness in himself and his goodness to us, we lay before him our wants and needs with the petition that they may be supplied, we confess our sins and plead for pardon and deliverance, and we thank God for his favors granted to us. Adoration, petition, confession and gratitude are thus the main elements of prayer. In some prayers there will also be intercession, that is prayer for others, and further a talking to God according as our hearts prompt us.

Is it natural that man should pray?

Yes, indeed it is. It is according to man's original state most unnatural that man should not pray. As God first made man it was his greatest delight and necessity to pray.

Man was originally made in God's image. He could therefore understand God and he could commune with his God. He was made a dependent being who ever needed the support and guidance of his God. This dependence he understood, and in the spirit of trust he lived with God as a child with the heavenly Father.

Even now since man has fallen in sin, there is yet a remnant of that sense of dependence left and a realization of the need of God's help and guidance. As a manifestation of this we find that all the various kinds of people maintain some system of religion and seek to obtain the good will of their deities.

In so-called christian countries there are many who do not pray and who seem to feel no need of prayer. A little investigation of the lives of these people will usually prove that it is through hardness of heart and wilful persistence in sin that they do not pray, or in other cases there has been an utter neglect of all religious training. In times of need, and in the prospect of death, most people will, however, seek some form of prayer. Then they find they can not deny the need of the human heart for God.

Can all pray as they should?

No, to pray aright there must be faith. The unbeliever is out of touch with God and he is unreceptive to the blessings of God. The believer has been restored into fellowship with God, he is back into the truly natural state of man, and it is thereby his privilege and joy to pray, to commune with God.

All may pray, all must pray, but to be able to pray as we should, we must remember that he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that seek after him. Heb. 11: 6.

James 1: 6, 7: "But let him ask in faith, nothing doubting; for he that doubteth is like the surge of the sea driven by the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord."

Do we need the Holy Spirit to pray properly?

Yes, we need the Holy Spirit to pray for us and within us, and also to teach us and prepare in us the proper spirit of prayer.

In Rom. 8: 26 Paul declares: "And in like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity; for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us with groanings which can not be uttered."

Independent of the believer himself the Spirit of God makes intercession, and he does this with so much intensity of purpose that it is with groanings which can not be uttered. Thus the believer is watched over by an Advocate in heaven, Jesus Christ, the Righteous, and he has within him an Intercessor, who knows his every want and ever pleads for him whom the Father loves.

The Spirit also helps our infirmities by preparing us to pray and guiding us in our own praying. He calls our attention to our needs, and leads us to repentance and faith, to adoration and praise.

Christian life can not exist without prayer, and ever again must the believer draw near to the source of his life and in prayer consciously abide in Christ, without whom he can do nothing.

What may we pray for?

For all things necessary for soul and body, which

Christ our Lord has comprised in that prayer he himself taught us. *Compendium*.

This prayer we all know is: "Our Father who art in heaven," etc. Matt. 6.

All prayer presupposes need and a desire to obtain the things needed. The sense of need and the desire to be blessed through the grace of God is altogether indispensable to true prayer. God answers no one whose heart is not engaged in his supplication. God regards the moans and desires of the heart more than the words in which they are expressed.

In our prayer we must be careful to pray for things agreeable to God's will; for assuredly we can not look for anything that is not so agreeable, and if God should give us things that were not according to his revealed will, they would not be blessings for us. Before we pray we should, as far as we can, learn God's will about the things we desire, and restrain or put forward our prayers accordingly. There are some things we may ask for with absolute confidence, since we have God's promises that he will give us these; other things we have no promise for, and for these we must ask conditionally, praying if it may be the will of God, to his glory and our welfare, that he grant us what we ask.

What are the requisites of acceptable prayer?

The most obvious are: sincerity, reverence, importunity, submission and faith.

1. Sincerity, because God searches the heart and is not satisfied with external homage.

2. Reverence or holy fear, because this is the first element of all true religion. The angels prostrate themselves before the throne of God, should not we?

The feeling of reverence toward God will produce the corresponding feeling of humility in ourselves. Be-

fore the greatness of God we will appreciate our own insignificance as creatures, and especially our uncleanness and unworthiness in the sight of God as sinners. This is the opposite of self-righteousness and self-complacency.

3. Importunity or urgency or request which causes us to renew our prayers repeatedly as an expression of the earnestness of our desire.

Think of the Syrophenician woman, the parable of the unjust judge.

4. Submission, which causes us to say, "thy will be done." We must be afraid to dictate to God as to when or how he shall bless us.

5. Faith, confidence or trust in God. Especially in prayer it is true that all that is not of faith is sin. Read the above concerning the nature of prayer.

In whose name must we pray?

In the name of Christ. John 16:16: "I have chosen you . . . that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you."

To pray in Jesus' name means to pray in trust upon his merits and in fellowship with him. The believer thus acknowledges his acceptance of Christ as his only sacrifice and intercessor before God.

We can not plead on our own merits and worth, nor simply trust in God's mercy outside of Christ; our pleading must be on the worth and mediation of our Savior.

CHAPTER VI

THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH

In the preceding chapters we have seen how the Son of God gathers unto himself his people out of the sinful world. They are naturally one with the rest of fallen humanity; guilty and therefore under condemnation and corrupt in heart, even spiritually dead in trespasses and sins. In gathering them to himself our Savior renews his people in heart and life, turns them from a life misspent in sin to the service of God. But the Savior not only brings them to himself, and through himself to God, he also brings them together, to form together under him one body, one people. Satan seeks to destroy all unity. He has succeeded in dividing the human race through sin. Humanity is torn apart, its unity is broken. Did not God's common grace prevent it, humanity would present the spectacle of hell, where discord and antagonism runs riot. Jesus came to destroy the works of Satan, to restore unity and harmony. All share in his favors in a measure through the blessings of society, but in and through his people, gathered and renewed through the Holy Spirit, Jesus restores true unity and harmony. He forms them to be together one body, the Church.

Col. 1: 18: "And he is the head of the body, the Church."

What is the meaning of the word Church in the New Testament?

The New Testament uses the word *ecclesia*, which among the Greeks meant an assembly of citizens called

together in some public place. In the christian sense *ecclesia* means a company of believers who constitute together one body in a certain locality, or a congregation, as the Church at Corinth, at Galatia. This word is also used to designate the whole body of christians collectively, the whole number of the saved of every time and place. Matt. 16: 18: "Upon this rock I will build my Church." Eph. 1: 22: "And gave him to be head over all things to the Church."

Eph. 3: 10; Phil. 3: 6; I Cor. 12: 28. Here the whole body of christians, all believers together are meant. Also Acts 9: 31: "The Church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace."

By using this word *ecclesia* the Bible lays stress on the fact that the Church is not a human institution, a society formed by the will of man, but of divine origin. The Church is a gathering called out of the rest of humanity. By his internal calling God has formed the Church. As among the ancient Greeks an *ecclesia* was a gathering of citizens called together by heralds from the rest of the population, so the Church is an *ecclesia*, a gathering called by God through his word and Spirit. We are not made members of the true Church of Christ through the use of outward means or by joining the visible Church on earth. God must make us members by calling us into living union with Jesus Christ. The true Church is spiritual, the mystical body of Christ.

Where is the Church of Christ?

One part is in heaven and another part on earth. The saints who have died in the Lord are still members of the Church. They are no longer as we on earth, however, in trouble and strife through sin, but have entered the rest of the children of God, where all perfectly share in the victory of Jesus Christ. The portion of the

Church in heaven we call the *Church triumphant*. The portion on earth, which is troubled and must fight for its very existence, is the *Church militant*. The enemies of the Church militant are the sinful world, our own evil flesh, and Satan.

CHURCH VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE

Is the Church on earth visible, can it be known by all?

The true spiritual Church is invisible. We do not mean that the Church is composed of invisible beings, such as the angels are, but we can not see who are truly members of the spiritual Church, nor can we see the benefit which these members receive in their union with Christ. The spiritual life of the Holy Spirit makes us true members of the eternal Church of Christ. But this life is hidden from view. The Church will once be visible in heaven, for the present the hidden relation and life of the true Church members is hidden.

But the Church is not only invisible, it also has a visible side. When God has called several unto himself as members of the spiritual *Church*, these thus called will feel drawn to each other, they have common needs and aims, and therefore join together as a visible body.

Thus the Church visible originates. The invisible Church precedes, and the Church visible follows as a necessary result of the Church invisible expressing itself. Where there is no Church invisible, that is, where there are no true believers in Christ, no visible Church can originate. Unbelievers can form a society or a club, but no Church. Among the heathen we can have mission stations, but not till there are true believers, who confess Christ and band together, can there be a visible Church. The distinction between Church visible and invisible is not that between two different Churches, but, as we trust

will be understood readily, between two sides of one and the same Church.

The Church visible is not an exact equivalent of the Church invisible. It is very probable that there are many connected with the Church visible who are not related to Christ, are not members of the Church invisible. They are temporarily connected with the Church visible on earth. They are the chaff among the wheat, the tares in the field.

It is also probable that a true believer, a member of the invisible Church, might through some cause not be a member of any portion of the visible Church. It is the duty and natural desire of every true believer to confess Christ and join his people, still an exceptional case might be found where a member of the invisible Church was not a member of the visible Church. He might through discipline have lost his membership, or he might not be in a position to join a local church of his persuasion.

ATTRIBUTES OF THE CHURCH

What are the attributes of the Church?

They are mentioned in the Apostles' Creed or the twelve articles of our catholic faith as *holy* and *catholic*. These attributes belong to the Church invisible. The Church visible is not holy, and because of its division the visible Church is not one body that is general or catholic. The Church invisible is holy because it is separate from the world and devoted to God. This holiness is not, however, an absolute holiness. As long as the Church is in the world, there is still much unholiness in the members. But in Christ, the head, the Church is perfectly holy, and a beginning of true holiness is given to the members. This holy principle also asserts itself in the outward life of the Church, for the believers

know and declare themselves to be separate from the world, they are the children of the light, the salt of the earth, a city on a mountain.

I Pet. 2: 9: "But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

The Church is catholic because it includes believers of every time and place. The Church of Rome assumes to claim that she alone is the Catholic Church, that all outside of her connection are outside of the true Church, and that none can be saved except through her agency. This is an arrogant assumption, and instead of calling this Church the Catholic Church we ought to designate her as the Roman Church. We Protestants, together with all christians in every part of the world, form the Catholic Church, which is not bound by limits of place or nationality. All christians are one in Christ, have one Spirit, one faith and one baptism.

Another attribute often added is *christian*, because the Church belongs to Christ, the Head, Redeemer and Owner of the Church.

Is the visible Church one united body?

No, it is divided into various parts, which are usually termed denominations. This division is caused by difference in nationality and of language, and especially by difference of insight into the revealed truth of God's word. It seems all christians can not agree on the meaning of divine revelation. Difference in views causes difference in teaching and in Church organization. As long as any denomination still recognizes the fundamental truths of God's word we must look upon it as a part of the christian Church, but when fundamental truths are

denied, as is done in the Unitarian circles, we can not look upon such circles as part of the Church.

Among the various denominations there are various degrees of purity in teaching and life. In order to know which denominations we must recognize as the best manifestation of the Church of Christ there are certain marks according to which we can measure and judge the relative value and purity of a denomination.

MARKS OF THE CHURCH

What are these marks according to which we can judge the purity of a denomination?

1. The preaching of God's word; 2. The proper administration of the sacraments; 3. The proper exercise of Christian discipline.

No portion of the Church is entirely perfect, the aim of every part ought to be to become as perfect as possible. The nearer we come to the fulfillment of the above requirements, the purer will our Church be.

First of all God's word must be purely preached, for this word has authority over our faith and life. The recognizing of this word as the will of God for us distinguishes the Church from every other institution and organization; and whenever a Church begins to lose respect for the word of God, and to place human thought above the plain teaching of the Scriptures, that Church soon loses her former purity and influence.

The word of God has been intrusted to the Church, and the mission of the Church is to spread the knowledge of this word throughout the world. By thus spreading the truth of God's revelation the Church becomes the mother of believers, through her the Church is perpetuated; if any Church fails to declare the word of God, she fails in her mission and becomes barren, no more

children of God are born in her midst. Unitarian circles have never yet succeeded in growing and spreading far, because they deny the fundamental teachings of the Bible. God does not own such circles as his Church and does not bless them as such. John 10: 26, 27: "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." John 8: 31, 32: "If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples." See Acts 2: 42; I Tim. 3: 15; Gal. 1: 8.

Not every deviation from the truth on a minor point will, however, cause a Church to lose the mark of the true Church. There are degrees of loyalty to the word and purity of teaching. A Church might be true to the word in the great essentials of salvation, while in some points there might be a mistaken conception of the truth and erroneous practices in consequence, but since the main truths of the Bible were believed and confessed, we would still look upon such a denomination as part of the Church of Christ. It might even be that there were a great number of very sincere christians in such a Church, even more than in another Church wherein there was a better conception of the truth, but wherein a dead orthodoxy instead of a living faith was emphasized. We can not estimate the purity of the Church, however, according to the number and activity of its members, but must judge a Church according to its confession. And usually where we find love of the word of God and acceptance of all its teachings, we will find the purest and strongest manifestation of the Church of Christ.

The proper administration of the sacraments is also a mark, for it is through the use of the sacraments that a Church expresses its faith and that communion with Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, and with his mem-

bers, is maintained. Our fathers maintained this point especially over against the Roman Catholics, who have invented various sacraments of their own. The proper administration of the sacraments means to have no more or less than God has instituted.

Christian discipline is also a necessary mark. The Church is to strive for holiness in life as well as for purity in doctrine. In every Church member there is much sin, and a perfectly holy Church we will not see till we reach heaven. But when there are outward sins that are in plain violation of God's will these must be forsaken or those who persist in them must be disciplined. Laxness of discipline has disgraced the Church in many places, has allowed the world to so influence the Church that there was no difference in the life of the professed members of Christ and the people of the world. Hereby the Holy Spirit is grieved and God's blessing withdrawn.

The Church officers are not expected to act as detectives to find out secret sins of the members, but open or known sins may not be tolerated which would offend the Church and be a scandal before the world.

A sin might be done in secret, but if it be known to the public, it must be repented for in public. In our day a great many sins are done in secret corporations and societies. The Church may not be able to say when or where a sin has been committed, but if it is known that the members are living in sin, are by their connections with others violating the laws of God, the Church must demand the forsaking of sin and holiness of life.

There are two kinds of sin that subject those who live in them to Church discipline: heresy in teaching and evil practices in conduct. If one belonging to the Church deny the teachings of Scripture as believed by his Church and seeks to introduce a doctrine the very oppo-

site of what the Church believes, such a one perverts the foundation of the Church and seeks to mislead the people. For the Church to allow this without protest and without discipline would be to commit suicide. In minor matters there must be charitable toleration of difference in opinion, but in essentials there must be firmness and loyalty to principle. Titus 3: 10, 11: "A factious man after a first and second admonition refuse; knowing that such a one is perverted, and sinneth, being self-condemned." Heresy in teaching must result in erroneous practices in life. We act and live as we believe. Therefore we must be careful to study God's word that we may guide ourselves and others aright.

What is the purpose of discipline?

Its purpose is twofold: medical and surgical. Medical in so far as it is intended to cure and reform the wrongdoer, and surgical in so far as it is intended to preserve the purity and spiritual health of the whole Church, by finally removing the impenitent who refuses to turn from his evil ways. Discipline must be exercised in the spirit of love, its aim must be to bring the erring back, to win, not to repulse. But if one refuses to manifest any spirit of penitence, he denies his faith by his action and thus brands himself as untrue and hypocritical. Such a one would be an offense to the Church and a danger of infection to others, and after patiently forbearing the Church must sever relation with the impenitent offender, lest the wrath of God rest upon the Church.

I Cor. 5: 13: "Put away the wicked man from among yourselves."

Matt. 18: 17: "And if he refuse to hear the Church also, let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican."

What method is followed in exercising christian discipline?

Matthew 18 prescribes the following method: Vs. 15, etc.: "And if thy brother sin against thee, go show him his fault between thee and him alone; if he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he hear thee not, take with thee one or two more, that at the mouth of two witnesses or three every word may be established. And if he refuse to hear them, tell it to the Church; and if he refuse to hear the Church also, let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican."

These words direct the procedure when one member has sinned against another. First there must be private efforts to bring the wrongdoer to repentance. The wrong done may not be told abroad immediately, but if private efforts fail, the Church through her officials must seek to gain repentance and reconciliation. If this is not gained the offending party becomes subject to Church discipline. Among us the process of discipline is: first, after due admonition, to refuse admission to the Lord's supper; secondly, to announce to the Church that a certain brother or sister has committed a certain sin, at this step the name of the offender is not mentioned; thirdly, to announce the name of the offender and the sin, this is not done except with consent of the Classis; lastly, the ex-communication is announced. This process is followed that at every step the offender may receive new warning and be urged to repent, and also that the Church may in brotherly love labor with and pray for the offending member.

In case of a public sin that is not exactly committed against another member of the Church, but that is an offense to the Church, the officials are called to imme-

diately urge repentance, and if they fail they must proceed with Church discipline as stated above.

In case one member has sinned against another or trouble between members has originated, the consistory must not immediately act, but insist on efforts of mutual reconciliation, according to Matt. 18, as noted above.

ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH

How ought the visible Church to be organized?

As near as possible according to the principles prescribed in God's word and according to the example of the early apostolic Church.

There is a wide diversity of opinion as the organization of the Church. Some consider it a matter of indifference, some are opposed to all formal organization, while others are desirous of organizing the Church in the minutest details under the strictest form of government.

We believe that we are to be governed according to the following principles in organizing the visible Church: The Church is a manifestation of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, he alone is her head and king, and all authority is derived from him. Christ has in his word revealed his will to regulate the life of the Church and of the individual members, and the Church is in duty bound to apply the declarations of the Scriptures to every department of her life. The Church may not act independent, as though she were a human institution, but is ever to serve her king. To the Church as a whole Christ has given authority to preach the gospel unto all creatures in his name, that is, to declare the will of God with authority given by Christ, and to administer the sacraments, also to formulate rules of church government in harmony with the Scriptures, and to exercise

christian discipline over her own members. This authority given to the Church is particularly vested in the church officials, and it is exercised by these officials in conjunction with the Church.

From these principles it is evident that our Reformed conception of the Church does not allow us to recognize any person, as e. g., the Pope or any class of persons, as Bishops, as standing above the Church and authorized to regulate the Church independent of the members. Jesus Christ is King, and his word is law. There is no anarchy or confusion, for through the proper officials Jesus preserves order in his church. These officials are elected by the members, but their authority in their offices is not of the people, but of Jesus himself, and for his sake they must be respected and followed as long as they are true to the Scriptures.

The Bible has not, however, given us a complete system of Church government, certain principal points have been given, but some parts of our system have been ordained by the various Synods of the Church as necessity and expediency demanded.

Even the regulations which are not expressly ordained in the Bible must be in harmony with the revelation of the Bible, and we must highly respect them, for they have been secured under the guidance of the Holy Spirit of the Church. This system of Church government is called the Presbyterian System.

What other systems of organization and of Church government are there?

1. The Erastian system. According to this system Church and State are united. The Church is a purely spiritual body and must not concern itself with any external matters, she must do no more than teach and persuade to a spiritual life, while the State must care

for her financial support, protect and help her through State laws, and even exercise discipline for her.

This system is found in differing phases in England and Germany, where the Episcopal and Lutheran Churches are wedded to the State.

2. The Episcopal system. According to this system the bishops are the direct successors of the apostles, and in these bishops is vested the authority to rule the Church. They represent the Church and they only may ordain other officials in the Church. All ministers in other Churches, not appointed by the bishops, are usually not recognized as ministers.

3. The Roman Catholic system. This system is a monarchy in the Church. The Pope is the infallible head and vice-gerent of Christ, he is not subject to any one, but is himself above all, and the whole Church dependent on him. According to this system there is a sharp distinction between the clergy and the laity, each forming a separate class, the laity being entirely dependent for all spiritual guidance and blessing on the clergy.

4. The Congregational or Independent system. According to this system every local congregation is an independent Church, not united with any other local Church. The authority in the Church is vested in the members, who can invest one or more persons of their number with the power to perform certain work in their own midst. A minister ordained in one Church has no official position in any other Church, he derives his position from the people of his own local Church and is limited to that local field.

This system also knows nothing of synod or classis where legislating is done that is binding on the local Churches. Representatives of local Churches may meet together and act as an advisory body but not as a legis-

lative body. This system is in vogue among the Congregationalists and most Baptists. It differs from the Presbyterian or Reformed system in that we believe the authority of our officials is not derived from the people but from Christ, also that our ministers are not officials in a local Church merely but in the whole denomination, and that the representatives of the local Churches may legislate for the Churches they represent. Among us the union, solidarity, and entirety of the Church as a whole is much more evident.

OFFICES IN THE CHURCH

What offices has Christ instituted in his Church?

These may be distinguished in extraordinary and ordinary offices. The extraordinary were those of Prophets, Apostles and Evangelists. The ordinary are those of Ministers of the word, Elders and Deacons.

Eph. 4: 11, 12: "And he gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ."

The prophets were men called of God to declare his will to the people of the Old Testament day. Sometimes they were specially inspired to declare new revelations and otherwise they were called to teach the people the revelations formerly given.

The apostles were men specially sent by Christ in the beginning of the New Testament day. The marks of an apostle were:

1. That he had been directly sent by Christ himself, Gal. 3: 1.

2. That he had known the Lord and seen him after his resurrection, Acts 1: 21, 22.

3. That he was specially inspired by the Holy Spirit and thus infallibly declared the will of God, John 16:13.

4. That he could perform miracles, Heb. 2:4.

The evangelists were assistants of the apostles, as e. g., Luke, Timothy, Titus.

The extraordinary offices have ceased in the Church, because the word of God is now complete and there are none who are now specially and infallibly inspired.

In the early apostolic church it seems there were two sorts of elders, the one laboring specially in the word and doctrine, and the other having the oversight of the Church and ruling the same with the elders who ministered in the word.

I Tim. 5:17: "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and teaching."

Here two kinds of elders are spoken of. Later the work of each kind of elder became more distinct, and there were recognized two distinct offices; that of the ministry of the word and pastor and the ruling elder.

Our form of ordination describes the work of the minister and pastor to be:

1. The explaining of the word of the Lord and applying the same, instructing, admonishing, comforting, and reproving, according to each one's need.

2. To call upon the name of the Lord in behalf of the whole congregation.

3. To administer the sacraments.

4. To keep the Church of God in good discipline, and to govern it in such manner as the Lord hath ordained.

The work of a ruling elder is described as:

1. Together with the ministers of the word to take

the oversight of the Church, and diligently to look whether every one properly deports himself in his confession and conversation.

2. To assist the ministers with their good counsel and advice, and to serve all christians with advice and consolation.

3. To have regard to the doctrine and conversation of the ministers of the word, that all things may be directed to the edification of the Church and that no strange doctrine be taught.

The work of the deacon is described as:

1. To collect and preserve the alms and goods which are given to the poor, and to use their endeavor that good means be procured for the relief of the poor. Acts. 6.

2. To distribute the alms to the poor with compassion and hearty affection.

These three offices are continued in the Church through an external and internal calling. The external calling is the call of the Church to a person to enter into the work of a certain office. This calling must be considered of God through his Church. The internal calling is a call of God in the heart to enter an office in the ordained way. To the internal calling belongs, that one feels to be driven by the love of God and his service, that one recognizes that there is a certain measure of fitness for the work to be done, and that one sees the way opened to reach the desired work in a proper way.

CHAPTER VII

DOCTRINE OF THE MEANS OF GRACE

Under this heading are treated: *The Word of God, The Sacraments, Baptism, Infant Baptism, Lord's Supper.*

What do we understand by the means of grace?

Means of grace are those institutions which God has ordained to be the ordinary channels of his grace; they are those instrumentalities through which the Holy Spirit operates upon the souls of men unto their growth in grace.

All grace is of God, has been obtained for the Church by Christ, and is applied by the Holy Spirit. The method of granting grace to his people is that it is gradually given, one part of grace preparing for another, as we have seen in treating the plan of salvation. Not only is there thus a fixed order of salvation, there are also ordained means whereby the Spirit applies grace and leads into the fulness of Christ.

These means are the word of God and the Sacraments. God may and often does use other instrumentalities to advance the edification of his children, as e.g., he may powerfully impress them through some events in their lives, losses, deaths, unusual blessings, but though these are then providentially made means of grace, they are not in themselves means of grace, they only tend to advance grace in connection with the word

of God, they are means whereby the word is applied to us. The particular and lasting means of grace are those whereby Christ communicates the benefits of his redemption; the word and the sacraments.

By calling these the means of grace it will be felt that they are not able in themselves to convey grace, they can only do this as instruments of the Holy Spirit. Many hear the word and partake of the sacraments who obtain no spiritual blessing, because the Holy Spirit's working is absent. To be spiritually blessed by the word and sacraments there must be grace in the heart, there must be new life of the soul. New life in the soul is due to the Spirit's working, the Holy Spirit has made the soul alive unto God. Growth of this new life is due to spiritual nourishment, which is through the word and sacraments. Spiritual food will not impart life to a dead soul, but it will strengthen one already quickened. When Jesus had raised the maiden from the dead, "he commanded that something be given her to eat." This illustrates the difference between regeneration and the following work of grace.

Do all appreciate the means of grace as we do?

No, there is the widest variation in this respect. On one hand are the mystics, who depreciate all outward means and look for all grace through inward light and immediate influence of the Spirit. On the other hand are the Roman Catholics, who practically have limited the possibility of obtaining any grace except through the sacraments. They declare their Church to be the dispenser of all grace, and the Church conveys it through the sacraments. There is therefore, according to this theory, little hope for one outside of the Romish fold. The Church of Rome declares that the sacraments contain the grace they signify, and convey it *ex opere*

operato that is, by the work done by the priest in administering the sacrament. As food has power to support life, so baptism itself regenerates, and the eucharist affords spiritual nourishment without regard to the faith or want of faith of those receiving the sacrament.

The Lutherans hold that faith is necessary to the efficacy of the sacraments, but they also hold that when received in faith the sacraments convey grace by an inherent virtue, just as they teach that the world sanctifies by an inherent virtue. Our doctrine is that both word and sacraments are made efficacious by the work of God's Spirit, and not by any power in themselves.

Many liberals of our day look upon the word and sacraments as having value only because of their educating and persuading influence. They declare or symbolize certain truths, and as these instruct and appeal to the mind they naturally influence the person for good. This theory ignores supernatural grace and the necessity of the work of the Holy Spirit.

From this diversity of appreciation we learn that we must be careful not to under- or over-estimate the meaning of the means of grace.

Which is the most important means of grace, the word or the sacraments?

The word is the most important and necessary. It is particularly through faith in the word that we are saved. There could be no sacraments without the word, wherein they were revealed and explained. In the public ministry of the word and in the private and prayerful reading of the word we have the best means of grace.

What are the two main parts of the word of God?

Law and gospel. These two are found together in every portion of the Bible, in both Old and New Testament. The representation that the Old Testament con-

tains the law and the New the gospel is wrong, there is gospel in the Old and law in the New Testament. Through both, law and gospel, the counsel of God is revealed unto salvation.

The law has a twofold purpose:

1. To convict of sin and thus drive us to Christ.
2. To be a rule of a grateful christian life.

The gospel is the glad tiding of God's saving love through Jesus Christ. Through the Holy Spirit law and gospel are both used in their proper way for continuing of God's covenant of grace, for conversion and sanctification.

II Tim. 3:15-17: "And that from a babe thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. Every scripture inspired of God, is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work."

Rom. 3:31: "Do we then make the law of none effect through faith? God forbid; nay, we establish the law."

THE SACRAMENTS

Why are the sacraments added to the word as means of grace?

To strengthen our faith in the promises of the word. They do not strengthen the promises of God, for these are strong enough, but our faith in the declarations of God needs confirmation. This the sacraments give in a twofold way; by symbolizing and representing in a visible way the truth declared in the word, and also by sealing and applying the grace of God to our hearts, thus increasing our faith.

The contents of the sacraments, the inner spiritual

meaning, is not different from the meaning of the promises of God in his word, both the word and sacraments reveal unto us Christ and his benefits. The sacraments illustrate the truth and seal our faith in accepting it. The word appeals especially to our hearing, the sacraments especially to our sight, and so through two senses God teaches us.

What is a good definition of the sacraments?

That of our Catechism: "The sacraments are holy signs and seals, appointed of God for this end, that by the use thereof he may the more fully declare and seal unto us the promise of the gospels, viz: that he grants us freely, remission of sin and life eternal, for the sake of that one sacrifice of Christ, accomplished on the cross."

From what we have said before concerning the means of grace in general, it will be clear to all that the benefit of the sacraments is not through any power in themselves, their office is to attest and ratify the benevolence of the Lord to us, and this is accomplished through the power of the Holy Spirit. If the Spirit is wanting the sacraments can avail us no more than the sun shining on the eyes of the blind.

Is the word sacrament a biblical term?

No, it is a word which the Church has appropriated from the military and judicial life of ancient Rome. A *sacramentum* was a sacred or dedicated thing. It signified originally a sum of money which was deposited by parties who entered on a lawsuit in a Roman court. The parties agreed that he who lost the case forfeited his money to the temple or other sacred institution. This money, *sacramentum*, was thus dedicated or sacred. The word next was used to signify the oath which the Roman recruit took to his general or emperor, by which oath he was dedicated to the emperor. When the Church took

over this word into her vocabulary she applied it to certain sacred or religious ordinances, especially such as contained an element of mystery, and inwardness.

What two things are included in every sacrament?

1. An outward visible sign used according to Christ's own appointment.

2. An inward spiritual grace thereby signified.

Thus the outward sign of baptism is water; of the Lord's supper, bread and wine. The inward grace signified in baptism is the washing away of our sins, in the Lord's supper the nourishing of our souls unto eternal life.

Between the outward sign and the inward meaning there is a natural connection, the outward sign being most naturally adapted to represent the inward grace; thus water is a cleansing element, therefore is the sprinkling with water the natural symbol most appropriate to represent cleansing of sin. The symbolizing of the inward grace by the outward sign is so perfect that sometimes the outward sign is figuratively spoken of as the inward meaning. Acts 22:16: "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins." Wherever the outward elements are received in faith, there the inward grace will also be given.

What makes the outward sign a representation of the inward grace, is the order of Christ and the word spoken at the administration of the sacrament. Before the administration or after the administration the outward sign is not a sign and seal of the inward grace, but while the administration of the sacrament lasts the words spoken in administering make the outward element a holy sign and seal.

The Roman Catholics, who believe that the bread and wine are actually changed into the flesh and blood

of Christ, teach that the inward grace is permanently contained in the outward element. Rome thus materializes grace.

Is the use of the sacraments necessary?

Yes, not as though we could not be saved without them, but because Christ has instituted them as perpetual ordinances in his Church. This is evident from the record of their institution and from the example of the apostles. Matt. 28:19; I Cor. 11:25, 26; Acts 2:41; 8:36-38.

How many sacraments has Christ instituted?

There are two sacraments in the New Testament day of grace: Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

There were also two sacraments during the Old Testament dispensation: Circumcision and the Passover.

Other eastern people also practiced a circumcision, but for Abraham and his descendants it was a religious rite instituted by God to sign and seal the covenant of grace God established with his people.

Rom. 4:11: "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith." Read also Gen. 17:9-14.

The passover was intended as a commemoration of the deliverance of the nation of Israel from the Egyptian bondage, and also as a typical sacrifice pointing to Christ, who delivers from the bondage of Satan. Israel was ever inclined to rest content in the outward observance of the sacraments. They boasted in their outward rites, which distinguished them from other people. Therefore the prophets condemned their vain trust in externalities and called on them to "circumcise the foreskins of their hearts, and be no more stiff-necked." Deut. 10:16; Jer. 4:4.

What difference is there between the sacraments of the Old and of the New Testament?

The sacraments of the Old Testament were intended for Israel as a nation as well as for Israel as a Church. The whole nation constituted the Church, and so all in the nation shared in the sacraments, and the sacraments also had a civil meaning as well as a religious.

As religious ordinances the Old Testament sacraments pointed forward to Christ who was yet to come, while ours today point to Christ who came. There is furthermore a greater amount of grace connected with the New Testament sacraments than there was with the Old Testament. Since the Holy Spirit has come on Pentecost more grace is given to the Church. In essence the meaning of the sacraments of the old day was the same as those of the new day.

How many sacraments have the Roman Catholics?

They have seven: baptism, confirmation, Lord's Supper, penance, extreme unction, orders and marriage.

BAPTISM

By whom was baptism instituted as a permanent sacrament in the New Testament Church?

By our Lord Jesus Christ, the Head and King of the Church, shortly before his ascension to heaven. Matt. 28:19: "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

These words were spoken by the risen Savior, who declared just previous, vs. 18, that to him had been given all authority in heaven and on earth. This authority, the reward of his obedience as Mediator, gave him the right to ordain that his disciples in every nation should be baptized.

What does it mean that we are to be baptized in or into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost?

It means that the washing or sprinkling in baptism symbolizes the separation of the baptized person from a sinful life, and his entrance into a new life unto the triune God, into a new relation toward the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, our covenant God.

When washed by the blood and Spirit of Christ we are freed from sin to henceforth lead a holy life. This washing is represented in baptism, whereby God signs and seals unto us our purification from sin and whereby we also pledge ourselves to be the Lord's. Our form of baptism very beautifully declares the meaning of being baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit: "When we are baptized in the name of the Father, God the Father witnesseth and sealeth unto us, that he doth make an eternal covenant of grace with us, and adopts us for his children and heirs; and therefore will provide us with every good thing, and avert all evil or turn it to our profit. And when we are baptized in the name of the Son, the Son sealeth unto us, that he doth wash us in his blood from all our sins, incorporating us into the fellowship of his death and resurrection, so that we are freed from all our sins and accounted righteous before God. In like manner when we are baptized in the name of the Holy Ghost the Holy Ghost assures us by this Holy Sacrament, that he will dwell in us, and sanctify us to be members of Christ, applying unto us that which we have in Christ, namely, the washing away of our sins and the daily renewing of our lives, till we shall finally be presented without spot or wrinkle among the assembly of the elect in life eternal."

Baptism is a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, and as the above words explain, our covenant God de-

clares in baptism he will grant us the covenant blessings, each person pledging himself to us.

But in a covenant there are ever two parts, if the one party pledge himself, the other must also, and does, if he truly accept the covenant. Our Baptism Form therefore also calls attention to our part, to what we are pledged when baptized unto the triune God: "Therefore are we by God through Baptism, *admonished of, and obliged unto new obedience*, namely, that we cleave unto this one God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost; that we trust in him, and love him with all our hearts, with all our souls, with all our minds, and with all our strength; that we forsake the world, crucify our old nature, and walk in a new and holy life. And if we sometimes through weakness fall into sin, we must not therefore despair of God's mercy, nor continue in sin, since baptism is a seal and undoubted testimony that we have an eternal covenant of grace with God."

In baptism we enter into new privileges and new duties.

Are the words: in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to be considered as an absolutely necessary formula to be used in baptizing?

No, we have no positive proof that Jesus intended these words as a formula for baptism, but as they declare the meaning of baptism the Church has wisely ordained that they should be used in baptizing. The use of these words is also a confession of faith in the doctrine of the Trinity, and if any one should refuse to use them it would be an evidence of his rejection of this doctrine, and therefore, of his unfitness to baptize.

In the early Church baptism was, however, mostly administered in the name of the Lord and of Christ. Christ is the Mediator, and in him is the highest mani-

festation of God. To be baptized in his name meant to enter into fellowship with God as revealed in Christ.

"He who is baptized puts on Christ, the second Adam; he is baptized, I say, into a whole Christ, and so also into his death, and it is the same thing as if, at that moment, Christ suffered, died, and was buried for such a man, and as if such a man suffered, died and was buried with Christ." (Bengel).

Who may administer baptism?

An ordained minister of the gospel. The ministry of the word and of the sacraments go together. Matt. 28:19.

Of what is the water in baptism a symbol?

Of the blood and Spirit of Christ. Christ's blood, that is, his death or merits of his death, takes away the guilt of sin, and the Spirit removes the internal pollution. Thus as water washes away the filthiness of the body, the blood and Spirit cleanse the believer of sin, and cleansing of sin always accompanies and means an increase in holiness.

The visible sign in baptism represents the invisible grace of regeneration, justification, and sanctification. These favors of God to his people are blessings of the covenant of grace, therefore baptism is a sign and seal of the covenant to the believer.

Acts 22:16: "And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name."

Acts 2:41: "They then that received his word were baptized; and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls."

Baptism is thus a sign of union with the people of God. Having received God's word and entered into God's service, baptism is a sign of his acceptance of

us and of our dedication to him and his cause. Hence baptism is a badge of our public profession, our separation from the world, and our initiation into the visible Church.

Is baptism absolutely necessary for salvation?

No, we can be saved though unbaptized. God has not made salvation dependent on the use of a sacrament. But baptism is necessary for all christians because commanded by Christ, and for the believer it is a most precious means of grace to quicken his faith. Since Christ has commanded that his disciples be baptized, it would look like treason to neglect or despise this ordinance.

Roman Catholics and some Protestants who believe in baptismal regeneration of course hold that baptism is necessary for salvation. They teach that baptism itself regenerates, as though it had a magical power. For this theory there is no proof in Scripture. This is the old doctrine of the Pharisees revived in new form. The Pharisees suspended all hope on circumcision and other externalities, but Christ and the Apostles strongly opposed this notion. "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith working through love." Gal. 5:6.

The Bible does speak of baptism as the "Washing of regeneration," but this is symbolical language, whereby the inward grace is attributed to the outward sign.

Is there only one mode in which baptism may be administered?

No, it may be administered by immersion, by sprinkling or by pouring on water. The main idea to be represented is cleansing. How much water is used and how applied are matters of small moment.

"Whether the person baptized is to be wholly immersed, and that once or thrice, or whether he is only to

be sprinkled with water, is not of the least consequence. Churches should be at liberty to adopt either according to the diversity of climate, although it is evident that the term baptize means to immerse, and that this was the form used by the primitive Church." (Calvin).

What is the position of the Baptists on this point?

They insist that immersion is the only proper mode of baptism, and therefore do not recognize baptism administered by sprinkling. They also teach that the main idea of baptism is not only cleansing, but the *death, burial and resurrection* of the believer with Christ.

As the person baptized goes under the water and then rises again, so is he supposed to die unto sin and to be raised unto a new life. This idea of baptism the Baptists gain especially from Rom. 6:4: "We are buried therefore with him through baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life."

Our answer to the Baptists is that we well know that baptism in the warm countries of the East was often administered by immersion, and that immersion is a beautiful symbol to represent the cleansing of the entire person from sin, but that we can not find reason to believe that immersion is the only valid baptism.

As to Rom. 6:4 we find from the context that Paul urges the christians to consider themselves dead to sin, e.g., as having so far put away sin that they ought not to be controlled and influenced by it anymore. This putting away of sin was represented in baptism, wherein they were buried in death with Christ. The main idea of baptism here is putting away of sin, that the baptized may henceforth walk in newness of life.

This putting away of sin was represented by baptism, which is spoken of as a being buried and a rising

up again. This undoubtedly refers to immersion. But the main idea here of immersion is putting away of sin. The same idea as when elsewhere baptism is represented as a washing or cleansing of sin.

The Baptists make much of the meaning of the words *bapto* and *baptizo*, which they insist mean to immerse, to dip in.

Our answer is that *Baptizo* originally did mean to dip in, but it also meant to cleanse, to wash. First it meant to cleanse by dipping in, later all kinds of cleansing was spoken of as baptizing, even not done by dipping.

1. In the Old Testament we read of Nebuchadnezzar that his body was wet with the dew of heaven; Dan. 3:33. Here the Greek translates *was baptized*.

2. In the New Testament *Baptizo* is used interchangeably with *Nipto*, which only means to wash. See Mark 7:3, 4; Luke 11:38; Matt. 15:2-20. Observe that, (a) to baptize is there spoken of as to wash, (b) the washing was to effect purification, hands unbaptized were unwashed and unclean, (c) the common mode of washing hands in the East is to pour water on them.

3. When John's disciples disputed about baptism, it is said to have been a dispute about purification. John 3:25, 26.

4. We even read of baptizing cups, pots, vessels, and tables, and couches. These things were not immersed, but washed or sprinkled.

5. Baptism of the Holy Ghost, of which water baptism is the emblem, is never set forth as an immersion, but always as a pouring or sprinkling. Acts 2:1-4, 32, 33; 10:44-48.

6. In I Cor. 10:1, 2, the Israelites are said to have been baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.

The Israelites were baptized but not immersed. The Egyptians were immersed but not baptized.

7. The cases of baptism in the New Testament do not sustain the Baptist position. Three thousand were baptized on Pentecost. Considering the great scarcity of water in Jerusalem and the short period of one day's time, it is not probable they were all immersed. The jailer was baptized in prison at night, and it is not probable he was immersed.

From these various facts we believe baptism may be administered by sprinkling. And as we baptize infants, sprinkling is the only reasonable mode.

Who are the subjects of baptism?

Believers and their children.

The necessity of believers being baptized, if they have not yet received this sacrament, is recognized by all christians, as it is plainly taught in Scripture. All also teach that no adult ought to be baptized unless he confesses a personal trust in and obedience to the Lord. Our Church therefore rightly requires that an adult who desires baptism shall: (a) show a knowledge of the fundamental truths of christianity and of the nature of the sacraments, (b) make a confession of personal faith in Jesus Christ, and of due submission to the constituted authorities of the Church, (c) be of good repute among his neighbors, so that his outward life does not belie his confession. Because baptism is the rite of initiation into the visible Church, these requirements are necessary.

If these evidences, which are the same as required for attendance at the Lord's Supper, are present in anyone the Church officials must meet him as a brother in Christ and baptize him. They are not to sit in judgment over the heart. If there is no outward evidence that betrays one as insincere we must accept one another in

love, and leave the responsibility of the step with the person making it.

INFANT BAPTISM

Is there an express order in the New Testament that infants are to be baptized?

No, there is no direct order for infant baptism, nor does the New Testament record one indisputable case of infant baptism. Our doctrine of the necessity of infant baptism is derived at inferentially; we gather our proofs from the prevailing view the Bible gives us of the relation wherein the children stand to the Lord and his Church.

It is not strange the New Testament does not make any specific mention of infant baptism. The New Testament record gives us the history of a missionary period, and in a missionary period, when the Church is being extended among those who before were outside, it is of course natural that predominant emphasis should be laid on the baptism of adults.

If one of our missionaries gains converts among the heathen, he baptizes these and so reports. But in this report most emphasis would be laid on the conversion and confession of the heathen, that being most important. If the converts had children he would baptize these and in his report he might refer to this particularly, or he might state it generally that the households were baptized. This is just the report we have in the New Testament. The writers state that Lydia *and her household* were baptized, that the jailer was baptized *and all his*, Acts 16, that Paul baptized the household of Stephanas I Cor. 1:16. It does not say that all were adults and all could personally believe, but when the heads of the families entered the Church the family also entered,

and it is most reasonable to accept that there were children in these families.

What seems to have been the practice of the early Church?

There are records that infants were baptized in the period following the apostles. It is acknowledged by Tertullian, born 160 A.D.; Origen, born 185 A.D., declares that it was "the usage of the Church to baptize infants and that the Church had received the tradition from the apostles." Cyprian, bishop of Carthage from A.D. 248 to 258, together with a synod over which he presided, decided that infants should be baptized before the eighth day. Augustine, born A.D. 358, declared that this "doctrine is held by the whole Church, not instituted by councils, but always retained."

There was a period in the early Church when many believed baptism actually took away all past sins, and so many postponed baptism till just before death, that they might appear blameless before God after death. This practice was not a rejection of the validity of infant baptism, but resulted from a mistaken view of the efficiency of baptism.

What are the biblical grounds for infant baptism?

1. First of all our belief in the biblical doctrine of the covenant of grace. God has established a covenant of grace with his people and with their seed after them. He does not accept the parent as an individual, apart from his family, but he places the believer with all his own, his family, his goods, his position and influence, in a particular relation towards himself. Especially are the children of the believer counted the Lord's. The believer must declare unto his children the revelation, the deeds and institution of the Lord, who has promised to per-

petuate his covenant and his Church from generation to generation. For proof see Gen. 17:7; Exod. 3:15.

This was true not only in the Old Testament day, but it is also true in the New Testament day. Christ was rejected by the unbelieving Jews, and yet he called their little children to him, embraced them and blessed them, and said theirs was the kingdom of heaven. When Zaccheus believed, Jesus declared salvation had come to his house.

The New Testament Church has come into the place of the Old Testament Israel. God's covenant now includes not only one people, but all nations in so far as they believe. The Jews were as branches of a good olive tree, sharing the fatness of the tree, the covenant of grace made with Abraham, but through their unbelief were they cut off, and the Gentiles, being naturally of the wild olive tree, were grafted into the good tree. And as God continued his covenant with Abraham's seed, so he now continues among us his covenant of grace; we are partakers of the root and fatness of the olive tree. Rom. 11:16.

Because God's covenant is historically continued, whole families are brought into the Church when the head of the family believes, as of Lydia, the jailer, Stephanas, Acts 16:15, 33; I Cor. 1:16.

Peter declared on the day of Pentecost to the Jews that the promise of God was to them and to their children. Acts 2:39. This was in the New Testament dispensation.

Paul declares the children of believers are holy, I Cor. 7:14, even when only one of the parents was a believer. He does not necessarily mean to say that they are all inwardly holy, but federally; they are separated from the children of the world and belong to God.

Since then the covenant of grace is continued, and baptism is a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, little children are entitled to the covenant sign and seal.

2. Our second ground is that the Bible teaches the children belong with their parents to the Church of God, and as baptism is the rite of initiation into the visible Church, our children must receive this also.

The New Testament Church is the same as the Old Testament Church. The Old Testament Church did not cease with the coming of Christ, but continued, though in a new dispensation. Isaiah declared the old Church was to be enlarged, not changed. Isa. 54. The Church in both Old and New Testament day has the same foundation; the same condition of membership, faith and obedience; sacraments of the same significance.

Infants were members of the Church in the Old Testament day, being circumcised on the eighth day. Now as the Church is the same, the conditions of membership the same, and circumcision signified and bound to precisely what baptism does, we believe infants are members of the Church and therefore ought to be baptized. The only ground upon which another conclusion would be necessary would be that Christ had expressly turned the children out of their ancient birthright in the Church. But on the contrary, Christ has recognized children as being in the Church, and he commands Peter to feed the lambs as well as the sheep of the flock. Therefore also the apostles baptized whole families; and in writing to the Churches Paul addresses the children as well as the parents, showing that he considered them members of the Churches. Compare Eph. 1:1 with Eph. 6:1-3, and Col. 1:1, 2 with Col. 3:20.

If we do not look upon children of believers as belonging with their parents to the Church, we must look

upon them as standing outside of the visible Church, as on a level with the heathen, and that these children later are to come into the Church without regard to the parents and the homes to which God gave them. The Church is thus, even in Christian communities, ever a mission Church, winning those outside. The biblical conception is rather that the Church is for her own children a training Church, that the lambs belong to the flock as well as the sheep.

3. We believe baptism has taken the place of circumcision, and since children were circumcised in the old day, we consider it necessary to baptize infants in the new day.

Many Baptists declare circumcision had only a national meaning, was intended to mark the Jew as a member of the Jewish people and nation, but that it had no spiritual significance, while baptism has altogether a spiritual meaning, and so these two are not equals, and the one can not take the place of the other.

Our answer is, the Bible teaches circumcision had a far wider meaning than to mark the Jew as a member of his nation. God first commanded Abraham to be circumcised, and at the same time instituted his covenant of grace with Abraham, in which he declared, he would be the God of Abraham and of his seed after him. As a sign and seal of this spiritual fact Abraham was to be circumcised. Paul declared, Rom. 4:11, that circumcision was for Abraham "a seal of the righteousness of the faith he had while in uncircumcision." Before circumcision Abraham believed and his faith was reckoned unto him for righteousness, and as a seal of this, circumcision was given. It therefore had a great spiritual meaning. Now what circumcision meant for the adult it must also have meant for the child. For the children

also it was a seal of the righteousness of faith, and an assurance that God was *their God*.

In later Jewish history the spiritual meaning of circumcision is also emphasized. Deut. 10:16; Jer. 4:4, Israel is told to circumcise the foreskins of their hearts, to remove the sin of their hearts, which was symbolized by the circumcision of their flesh.

Baptism also represents the removing of sin, and is also a seal to the believer that he is righteous through faith, and both are initiatory rites, so both are equals in their spiritual significance.

In the New Testament, circumcision is discarded as antiquated by the express order of the Apostles, while baptism is insisted on. The objection often made that children are not conscious of the meaning of baptism, and therefore that it is a useless operation for them, is also true of circumcision, and yet God expressly commanded this sacrament to be administered to the infants. In tender mercy he claims the babes of his people as his own and before they are themselves aware of it, he seals unto them his covenant promises. The babes are from the first lost in Adam, are born in original sin, and are subject to death and condemnation, but the grace of Christ is no less comprehensive than the sin of Adam, it incorporates the children from the hour of birth in the covenant of grace, and divine love condescends to embrace the babe and administer to it the sacrament of grace.

4. In the New Testament history, which extends as far as thirty or thirty-five years after the death of Christ, we never read of baptism of any of the grown-up children of the early converts of christianity. The absence of any such record is suggestive. It seems to in-

dicate that the children of such converts had received baptism with their parents.

What efficacy do we ascribe to infant baptism?

The Reformed Church teaches that baptism is "an ordinance of God, to seal unto us and our seed his covenant."

The child of the believer is, like all other children conceived and born in sin. The God of all grace has, however, placed the believer and his children in covenant relation with himself. Baptism is for the believer a sign and seal of God's grace unto perfect salvation, and perfect salvation includes everything needed to be delivered from sin and its punishment, and to be brought to eternal life. Baptism does not convey these blessings, it signifies and seals the covenant relation in which these blessings are included.

Children of believers are born in covenant relation. Baptism is for them a sign and seal that God is their God, and that to them belong the covenant blessings, and also the covenant obligation to live as children of God.

Baptism is not administered by us to convey any special grace, or to declare that the individual infant is already born again. We do not know anything about the individual infant, whether it is one of God's elect or not, whether it has been born again or will later be born again, whether it will die young or live to old age. We are happy to know the child was born in a covenant home, to which the covenant relation extends. We have every reason to expect and to hope that the child will grow up a believer, for it has the promise of God's grace, which promise God usually fulfills through a faithful covenant training. Undoubtedly many children are born again in infancy, and the majority of the children who

receive a training in the fear of God are saved at some period in their lives. God is ever at work regenerating his covenant children, but he has not told us in advance at what hour he regenerates the individual. In case God takes away the child of the believer by death, we do not hesitate to say: "godly parents have no reason to doubt the election and salvation of their children whom it pleaseth God to call out of this life in their infancy." Canons of Dordt I:17. God's covenant is not a mere form, it is a saving covenant, and God can give regeneration to a child equally as well as to an adult. God has declared he is the God of the covenant children, if he takes them away we believe he takes them to himself, not because they are without sin, but in virtue to the covenant of grace.

What does infant baptism mean for the parents and for the Church?

For the parents it means both the receiving of a great assurance of God to themselves and their children, this is for their comfort; and it means the assuming publicly of the high calling to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. See Form for Administration of Baptism.

For the Church infant baptism is a visible evidence that God will perpetuate his covenant and his Church in succeeding generations. Infant baptism should therefore be an occasion of rejoicing in the Church.

What should his baptism mean for every youth?

It should deeply impress him with his calling as a covenant child. He must appreciate that the promises of God's word to his people have been confirmed to him, and that it is his solemn privilege and duty to ask the Lord for the fulfillment of these promises, that by the grace of God he may in his whole life behave as a child

of God. He does not belong to the world, he may not live as the children of the world. The people of the world do not understand and do not sympathize with his covenant relation, they desire to erase all difference between themselves and the christians, but the covenant child must show that he realizes there is a difference. God claims him and God makes this claim as a gracious Father, who will gladly give all that is needed to lead a christian life, if it is sought in the way of faith.

The public acknowledgment on the part of the covenant children that they accept their God-given position, with its favors and duties, is their confession of faith. They do not thereby become members of the Church, they were members before baptism. They confess that with the heart they accept what baptism has meant for them.

May the children of all parents be baptized?

No, since baptism is a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, only children of those parents who accept the covenant for themselves can be baptized. Baptism must not be used out of custom or superstition. The questions put to parents in our Form of Baptism are such that none but a believer can answer them, therefore the parents are addressed as "Beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ." When a parent presents his child for baptism he makes precisely as strong a statement of faith as he would were he to make a confession of faith, and he would make no stronger profession if he came to the Lord's Supper.

In answer to the question whether children of baptized members are entitled to baptism, we would not dare to deny that they are, but their parents are not really able to answer the questions put to them in having their infants baptized. A so-called baptized member is yet ever a minor, a child, no matter how old he may be,

and a child can not honestly assume the obligations required to have another child baptized. It would be wrong for a person destitute of personal faith to assume the obligations of the baptismal covenant, and it would be wrong for the Church to help them to do it.

In the Old Testament day all children were circumcised, even those of unbelieving parents. But we must remember that circumcision had not only a spiritual meaning, it also had a national meaning, it was a sign of Jewish citizenship. Therefore its administration was as wide as the nation. In the New Testament the Church is a separate institution, and only the spiritual meaning of the sacraments is in force today.

We are reminded by those who favor the practice of baptizing all the children of baptized members that in the Old Testament all the children of the Jews were circumcised, no matter what their parents were like. Of this we are aware, but we are also aware that discipline was for a great part of the time in the old day entirely neglected. The Jews were often as idolatrous as any heathen, worshiping Baal and Molech, and ignoring all the claims of their covenant Jehovah, yet these idolatrous parents circumcised their children through custom and superstition. Objectively the children were the Lord's, but for the idolatrous parents circumcision could have had no religious meaning, for them to continue the practice, when they had rejected Jehovah, was sacrilegious.

If all children are to be baptized, then the parents, who accept baptism for their children, must also for themselves accept the second sacrament of the covenant of grace, that is, the Lord's Supper. Among Israel it was even ordained that if any one refused to observe the feast of the Passover he should be cut off from among his people. *Exod. 12: 15, 19.*

What sacrament of the Old Testament day corresponds most nearly to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper in our day?

The Passover, divinely instituted in the night when Israel left Egypt. It required a lamb without blemish, roast with fire, unleavened bread and bitter herbs. These were to be eaten with loins girded, shoes on the feet, and staff in hand, all ready for a hasty march.

This ordinance was *discriminative, commemorative, typical and prophetical*.

Discriminative, for by the blood of the lamb put on the posts and lintels of the doors of the Israelites they were saved from the destroying angel of death, while the first born of the Egyptians were slain.

Commemorative, for by it they were ever reminded what great things God had done in delivering them from bondage.

Typical and prophetical, for it pointed to Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world, and as type of Christ the lamb was a sacrifice, a sin-offering.

In harmony with the national custom Jesus and his disciples partook of the passover the night before his death. As they were nearly through with the passover Jesus took some of the remaining bread and brake it and gave it to his disciples with the words: "Take, eat; this is my body. And he took a cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins." Matt. 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; I Cor. 11:23-30.

What are the various phrases used in Scripture to designate the Lord's Supper?

1. Lord's Supper, I Cor. 11: 20. It was called the Lord's, because instituted by him, to commemorate his death, and signify and seal his grace; and it was called a supper, because instituted in the evening.

2. Lord's Table, I Cor. 10: 21. It is the table at which the Lord invites his people and at which he presides.

3. Communion, I Cor. 10: 16. At the Lord's table the fellowship of the believers with Christ is exercised in a mutual giving and receiving, and there is also exercised the fellowship of believers with one another, through Christ.

Other names used were: Cup of Blessing; Breaking of Bread; Eucharist, meaning that it was a thanksgiving service.

In the early Church there were also Agapae, or love feasts, held in connection with the Lord's Supper, but these did not continue very long, as they gave occasion to serious abuse, many even becoming intoxicated, and did thus *unworthily*, or in an *unworthy manner*, commemorate the Lord's death. Paul condemned this abuse in the Corinthian Church. See I Cor. 11: 20.

To what must we specially give attention in the words of the institution of the Lord's Supper?

To the elements used, and the sacramental actions spoken of.

The elements were bread and wine.

As Christ has offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sufficient, no more lambs need to be slain, and the sacrament of the New Testament needs not the shedding of blood. Spiritual nourishment and quickening are mainly needed at present, and as bread is the staff of life for the body, and wine is a stimulant, these two are proper symbols of the Spiritual food that nourishes the soul.

In regard to the question what kind of bread must be used, we believe that the common bread of daily life best fulfills the requirements of the symbol. Because unleavened bread was the only kind at hand in the pass-over Jesus used this in instituting the Supper, but that did not mean that we also must use this as the Romish and Lutherán Churches hold. The wine used was fermented juice of the grape.

The sacramental actions that draw attention are:

1. The taking and blessing of bread and wine, hereby the elements were set apart from their common use to a sacred use. The blessings here spoken of is to invoke a blessing. After the celebrating of the Lord's Supper the bread and wine are no more set apart for sacred use, and must not be superstitiously regarded as the Romish Church teaches.

2. The breaking of the bread. This is symbolical of the rending of Christ's body on the cross, and of all the communicants, being many, feeding upon one Christ, as upon one bread.

3. The distribution and reception of the elements. This is a most essential part of this ordinance. Christ bade the disciples take and eat. Thereby he symbolically gave himself to his disciples, and they in taking and eating by faith appropriated Christ to themselves as a perfect sacrifice for their sins and a perfect nourishment of their souls unto eternal life. The Lord's Supper is rightly called a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, for it is through this holy ordinance that Christ and his people renew and symbolize their covenant relation.

Christ gives himself as the covenant God and Savior of his people, who has by his suffering and death gained the covenant blessings for their salvation, and his

people in attending this Supper publicly declare their acceptance of Christ as Savior and Master.

The wine Christ called the blood of the covenant, e. g., my blood is the seal of the covenant of grace, and this cup is the symbol of my blood, and as such is offered to you. We, in taking this cup, solemnly bind ourselves to entire consecration to Christ, we show forth our Christian profession, our allegiance to the kingdom of heaven. The term communion is very beautiful when understood as covenanting, for the Lord's Supper signifies and effects our covenanting with the Lord in Person, in his offices and benefits. Paul says: "The cup of blessing, which we bless, is it not a communion of the blood of Christ? The bread, which we break, is it not a communion (or participation) of the body of Christ?" I Cor. 10: 16.

See Heidelberg Catechism, 75, 76, 77.

Did Christ intend the Supper as a perpetual institution?

Yes, this appears from the words: "This do ye as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me"; it also appears from the apostolic example, and from the frequent references of this ordinance which occur in the apostolic writings.

What did Christ mean by the words: "for you"?

That his body was not broken for all, but for his people alone.

What did Christ mean by the words: "in remembrance of me"?

That we are specially to remember his suffering and death at the Lord's Supper. See Form for Administration of Lord's Supper, II: 1.

What is the meaning of the words: "this is my body, my blood"?

Various explanations are given:

1. The Roman Catholic Church teaches that this expression is to be taken literally; that what appears as bread and wine is really the flesh and blood of Christ, that the substance of the bread is changed into the body, and the substance of the wine into the substance of the blood of Christ, so that only the sensible parts of bread and wine remain, while the substance is the true body, and blood. Thus Christ is thought to be literally eaten and drank by every recipient, and the Romish Church has the very Christ shut up in a box, carries him about and worships him. When the words of consecration are pronounced by the priest the substance of the bread and wine changes, this is called *transubstantiation*, or conversion of substance. This change of substance is permanent, and as it is considered to be the very Christ it may be adored.

2. The Lutherans hold that while the bread and wine remain substantially the same, nevertheless at the words of consecration the real body and soul of Christ, though invisible, are really present, *in, with and under the bread and wine*. This is called *consubstantiation*. The Lutherans do not believe as the Roman Catholics do, that the presence of Christ is effected by the officiating minister, nor that his presence is permanent, it ceases when the sacrament is over.

The Lutherans believe that because of the union of the divine and human natures in Christ there are certain properties of the divine nature shared by the human, and the entire Christ, body and soul, as well as divinity, are omnipresent. Thus Christ can be according to his human nature in, with and under the bread and wine.

3. The Reformed Churches hold that this word: "is my body," must be taken figuratively, and means "repre-

sents," "symbolizes." Just as we say of a picture: "this is my father," or as Joseph said: "the seven good kine are seven years."

The Reformed agree that what the believer feeds upon is not the substance but the virtue or efficacy of the body and blood as broken and shed for sin. This is done by faith through the power of the Holy Spirit. This appropriating of the Savior is not confined to the Lord's Supper, but takes place whenever faith in him is exercised.

What objections have we against the Romish and Lutheran doctrine?

a, It is not taught in Scripture; *b*, it confounds the idea of a sacrament, making the outward sign identical with the thing it signifies; *c*, it contradicts our senses, since we see, smell, taste, and feel only bread and wine, and we do not believe God would want us to practice such self-deception on ourselves; *d*, it is absurd, since when Christ gave the disciples the bread he was sitting by them in his sound, undivided flesh, and since his body is glorified it is still material, and therefore limited and not omnipresent in all places of the earth, but present only at the right hand of God in heaven; Paul speaks of the bread as bread after as well as before consecration. I Cor. 10: 16.

The Roman Catholic doctrine is an inseparable part of their priestcraft. They regard their clergy as the channels of grace to the people, and for the conveying of grace they have exalted the sacraments as the absolutely necessary instruments, and so to convey Christ to the people they have him confined in a little wafer. No wonder our fathers spoke of the Romish mass as an abominable idolatry.

The Roman Catholics are very much afraid lest part

of the body and blood of the Lord should be lost or spilt, and so the bread is prepared in wafers that will not crumble, and the cup is denied to the people and confined to the priests. To comfort the people they teach that as the blood is in the body the whole Christ is in every part of the bread, so that he who receives the bread receives all.

Where should the Lord's Supper be held?

Because we believe it is essentially a communion, in which the fellowship of believers with Christ and with one another is set forth, we believe it should be held in the gathering of believers. In particular cases, however, some Reformed teachers held it may be administered in private homes for the benefit of believers long confined by sickness, provided the officers and some members of the church be present to preserve the true character of the ordinance as a communion.

What views are held as to the efficacy of the Lord's Supper?

The Roman Catholics teach that as the substance of the Savior is present in the mass the receiver is nourished spiritually, is sanctified and replenished with merit by this actual substance, if he does not present an obstacle to its efficacy in him. According to his gross material conception God's grace is in the substance or material used.

Besides the Romish Church teaches that the converted bread and wine is a sacrifice to God for sin. It is said to be the substance of Christ and the priest holds aloft the Christ, and again offers him as a continual sacrifice for sin, for the sins of the dead as well as of the living.

Zwingli, who died 1531, held that the bread and wine were mere memorials of the death of Christ, and

denied that Christ was in any special sense present in the Lord's Supper. For him it was not a means of grace, only an act of commemoration and a badge of profession. The mystical element is thus ignored. This view is found in many liberal circles today.

For a right understanding of the Reformed and only biblical conception of the efficacy of the Lord's Supper we must call attention to two important facts: first that the elements used are broken and poured out; secondly, that they are a food, bread and wine.

1. The elements are broken and poured out, thereby reminding us of the suffering and death of Christ, which, as we well know, are the deserving and earning cause of our securing pardon of sin and deliverance from eternal death. When therefore the broken bread and poured out wine are given to us they are in assurance to us of Christ himself that he has given his life in death for us and has thereby gained for us our justification. The believer is thus perpetually assured of his redemption by the use of the Lord's Supper.

2. The elements are a food, thereby to assure us that Christ is the constant source of our spiritual life that he is our meat and drink unto eternal life. See John 6.

Between Christ and the believers there is a vital union, since through the Holy Spirit he abides in us and we in him. This union was established in the new birth and is ever thereafter maintained by the Holy Spirit who dwells in Christ as our head and in us as his members. We are always to live out of the fulness of Christ as the branches do out of the vine. Our growth in grace, our power for service and our enjoyment of christian life depends on Christ living and ruling in us. Since he has come to dwell in us he causes our faith to reach out to him and appropriate his blessings, the blessings of the

covenant of grace. Whatever may therefore unite us closer to Christ is beneficial to our spiritual life. Thus the hearing and studying of his word will tend to increase our faith and to lead us to reach out to Christ. And a specially profitable means to lead us to Christ, our living dead, is the Lord's Supper. The very elements and actions of the Supper draw us to Christ as the only source of our life and complete salvation. With our bodily senses we appropriate, eat and drink, food, and if we in faith look to Christ we also with the hand and mouth of faith appropriate Christ for the nourishing and quickening of spiritual life. The power to do this is not in faith itself, but in the Holy Spirit, who takes of Christ and declares unto us in answer to our faith. The Lord's Supper is not a converting ordinance, for it does not supply grace where it is lacking, but it does strengthen the grace present in the heart. This result is not only obtained while we are at the table, but is a permanent increase, as our natural food tends to strengthen us long after we have eaten it.

We must therefore not cleave with our hearts to the external bread and wine, but lift them up on high in heaven to the living Christ, not doubting that we shall be fed and refreshed in our souls through the working of the Holy Ghost, with his body and blood, as we receive the holy bread and wine in remembrance of him. From this being fed by the Holy Ghost an increase in sanctification, in hope, love and faith will result.

So in this ordinance we not only remember Christ, we also receive him. Christ is present to his people, not in body, but in Spirit, in saving operation. The efficacy of this sacrament is not in the elements, not in the service, not in the minister, but in the attending Holy Spirit, who by this means of grace, preserves and in-

creates the spiritual union between Christ and us, and gives us a claim on all that is in Christ.

For whom is the Lord's Supper instituted?

It is instituted for the Lord's people. None but believers should come to it, and none who believe in Christ should stay away from it. It is not required, however, that we should be assured of our salvation, of our regeneration and conversion, before we may come to the Lord's Supper. If this were required but few could attend. The Lord's Supper is instituted because of the weakness of our faith, because of our misery, our guilt and pollution, our doubt and uncertainty, and the wavering of our faith. Babies in Christ need food fully as much as fathers in Christ. Our Form for the Administration of the Lord's Supper declares that self-examination is necessary, and declares that this consists in three parts:

1. Whether we abhor ourselves because of our sins and humble ourselves before God on account of them.

2. Whether we flee to Christ for complete salvation and depend on him alone as our sufficient righteousness and source of life.

3. Whether we sincerely desire to fight all sin and to show true thankfulness to God and to live uprightly before him; and also whether we firmly resolve to walk in true love and peace with our neighbor.

No one is worthy to attend. But worth is one thing when a communicant is viewed in himself, and it is another thing when he is viewed as in Christ, and invited by him. A sense of utter unworthiness is a mark of worthiness.

We sincerely hope all our covenant youth will appreciate that they ought to attend the Lord's Supper. It is God's will that they should accept their covenant obligation and privileges. If they say they can not, let them

examine why they can not, and in prayer to God, forsake their evil ways.

All our young men and women when they have arrived at years of discretion are in duty bound to forsake the world and deliberately choose to serve their covenant God, in whose name they were baptized. These years of discretion arrive before one is twenty years of age, and it is therefore not right that confession of faith is put off till near or even after middle age of life. Remember, what we lack God can supply, if we are honest with him.

May the consistories allow any one to come to the Lord's Supper?

No, the Lord's Supper was instituted for believers or disciples; and so to allow those who are well known as unbelievers to partake of this holy ordinance would be to be a sharer in their sacrilege. The consistory must examine whether the applicant has a correct knowledge of the meaning of the Lord's Supper, leads a Christian life, and makes a credible profession of his personal faith.

The consistory is not to sit in judgment over the heart, and the elders can not declare whether any one is converted or not. They must admit those who in Christian judgment of love are by their confession and conduct professing Christians. All these they must even urge and admonish to attend in obedience to the Lord. The Church must ever renew the call to all that they examine themselves, and that uprightness of heart in penitence and faith are necessary. This will discourage the careless souls, while those who are upright, though they be weak in faith, will become more aware of their need of this spiritual food and drink.

See form for administration of Lord's Supper 1:3.

CHAPTER VIII

THE DOCTRINE OF THE LAST THINGS

Under this heading are treated the following:

1. The State of the Soul After Death.
2. The Second Advent of Christ.
3. Resurrection of the Dead.
4. Final Judgment and the Eternal State of all Creatures.

In what does the life of all on earth end?

In death, for "it is appointed unto men once to die."

In our discussion of sin and its punishment we have already seen that corporal death is the breaking up or suspension of the union between soul and body. Following this dissolution the body is resolved into its chemical elements, and the soul is introduced into its separate state of existence assigned to it by its Creator and Judge.

Can we explain the reason of death from purely natural causes?

No, for the reason why we must die is a perfect mystery, unless we turn to the Bible for explanation, and this tells us "the wages of sin is death." Sin is itself the beginning of death, for through sin man breaks his bond, his union with God, and separated from God man sinks into death.

Why do the justified die?

Not as a suffering of the punishment of sin, for Christ has borne their penalty. Death is necessary for

them as a gateway to eternal life, the present constitution not being fit for glory. The sting of death is removed for them, and when this last enemy shall be destroyed, they shall be entirely freed from his grasp.

THE STATE OF THE SOUL AFTER DEATH

Does the soul continue to exist after death?

Indeed it does, for the soul of man is immortal. the body is mortal and returns to dust after death, but the soul has a conscious existence independent of the body, and waits the morning of the resurrection to be reunited with the body.

Why do we believe in the immortality of the soul?

Because this is the plain teaching of Scripture.

Matt. 10: 28: "Be not afraid of them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul."

In II Cor. 5: 8 and Phil. 1: 22-24 Paul defines death as a departing of the soul, a going to be with Christ.

Eccl. 12:7: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it."

The doctrine of the immortality of the soul is pre-eminently an article of faith. We believe in a continual and future existence after death, because God has declared that he would ever exist.

Our faith does not, therefore, rest first of all on scientific proofs that are sought outside of the Bible, but on the Word of God first and above all. A looking forward to a future existence is not, however, found alone among christian people, it is universal, at least with all tribes and races that are fairly intelligent. Their systems of religion, their pyramids and cemeteries, their ancestor worship, and their writings above all, prove their hope of immortality. This hope is yet a survival of

the original constitution of man's nature, and an evidence that God has set eternity in their heart, Eccl. 3:11, R.V.

Many have presented it as though the idea of immortality was produced in the human heart by his natural desire to live, his fear of death, his desire of reward and dread of punishment, his love of relatives, and by other considerations, without that there was any reality in the future world to correspond to these desires and expectations. The idea of immortality would then be no more than the result of a wish and imagination.

This we turn from as too superficial for refutation. The universal hope of mankind and all the heroic deeds of history refute this theory.

We plainly see that the expectation of immortality is natural, is spontaneous, is not produced by a set of arguments and a process of reasoning, but is the conviction of the soul immediately it hears of this.

The looking for immortality is as natural as the faith of the soul in the existence of God. No long arguments are needed to prove either, we easily believe both, because of the impressions God created in us.

Yet there are certain proofs often advanced, the most important of which are:

1. The first proof is derived from the consideration of the nature of the soul. The soul is a spirit, and a spirit is not derived from the material and cannot be thought to be extinguished with the return of the material body to dust. The soul is not composed of various parts but is simple and single. At death it cannot be divided into various elemental parts as the body can. There are only two possibilities; either that it be entirely annihilated or that it continues to exist as an undivided whole. We can not believe it will be annihilated, for even in the material world there is no annihilation, of

anything, there is dissolution of various parts of material things, but not an atom is annihilated, and since the soul can not be dissolved into parts, we conclude that it must continue to exist after death.

2. The second proof is derived from the consideration of the difference between men and animals. Animal life is directed to material things, finds its satisfaction in the material world and can not exist outside of its material connection. The soul of man, however, is not content with the material world, his reason and intellect go beyond the material and temporal to the eternal. Man is aware he can not find completion and perfection here below, and especially his religious nature feels he can not find rest but in God. From this longing for a higher good, for an eternal felicity, we conclude the Creator must have intended us for an eternal existence.

3. The third proof is derived from the consideration of the moral condition of the world. The heart of even the wicked and ungodly must consent that it would be right that righteousness should triumph over unrighteousness, and that at some time evil should be punished and righteousness rewarded. But the history of the world shows that here evil is often associated with prosperity, and moral excellence with distress, from this condition we conclude there will be a future world in which all that at present appears inconsistent with the justice of God shall be adjusted.

These proofs or arguments are not indisputable, they are indications of the natural persuasions of the soul.

What will be the state of the soul after death?

The Bible teaches that the soul will be in a state of conscious existence, being aware of its surroundings and able to think and to remember.

II Cor. 5: 8: "We are of good courage, I say, and

are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord."

Luke 23: 43: "Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in paradise."

In Luke 20: 38 Jesus answered the unbelieving Sadducees who said there was no resurrection, that God is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; "now he is not the God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto him." This plainly shows that there is a conscious life, a serving of God, in the other world. And from the fact that the dead are still living Jesus' teaching to the Sadducees also intended to infer that there will be a resurrection.

In Eph. 3:15, the Church is declared to be one whole family, of which at present part is in heaven and part on earth.

In Acts 1: 25, Judas is said to have gone to his own place.

In Rev. 6:9-11, the souls of the martyrs are represented as under the altar in heaven, praying for the punishment of their former persecutors.

Is the state of the soul after death changeable or unchangeable?

It is unchangeable. At death every soul is judged and its eternal place assigned, which is either heaven or hell.

The moral and spiritual character is also at death irrevocably decided either for good or evil. The righteous are immediately made perfect in holiness in the presence of Christ. The unrighteous pass away into the torment of hell.

Matt. 7: 13, 14: "Enter ye in by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many are they that enter in thereby.

For narrow is the gate, and straightened the way, that leadeth unto life, and few are they that find it."

In the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, Luke 16, Jesus declares Lazarus was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom, and the rich man died and lifted up his eyes in hell. See Par. Talents, Matt. 25.

II Pet. 2: 9: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment unto the day of judgment."

From these and other places of Scripture it is plain that the state of the soul is unalterably fixed at death. The body will share with the soul in its eternal destiny after the resurrection.

When viewed in relation to the states which precede and which follow, the state of the soul after death may be called *intermediate*. It differs from the final state, because of the absence of the body, and the fulness of salvation and of torment can not be realized without the body.*

What does the Roman Catholic Church teach in regard to the souls of men after death?

1. The souls of unbaptized infants go to the *Limbus Infantum*, where they do not suffer positive suffering, neither do they enjoy the vision of God. They are in a higher place of purgatory where the fires do not reach which afflict the adult sinners.

2. All unbaptized adults, and all who have lost the grace of baptism by mortal sin, and die unreconciled to the Church, go immediately to hell.

3. The souls of believers who have attained chris-

* In recent years some have spoken of the "Realm of the Dead" (Doodenrijk) not simply as a state but as a place, the Sheol of the O. T., the Hades of the N. T., wherein all the souls of the righteous as well as of the unrighteous, are gathered to await the Judgment Day. But such is in direct conflict with the texts quoted on p. 288 (Cf. Que. 57, Heid. Cat.)

tian perfection go immediately to heaven. This is the privilege of but very few.

4. The great mass of partially sanctified Christians dying in fellowship with the Church, yet still cumbered with imperfections, go to purgatory, where they suffer, more or less intensely, for a longer or shorter period, until their sins are atoned for and purged out, when they can go to heaven.

Concerning purgatory the Church teaches: 1, that there is a purifying fire through which imperfect christians must pass to be purged of sin; 2, that souls in purgatory may be benefitted by the prayers and masses offered in their behalf on earth.

This doctrine of purgatory we reject, because:

1. It has no foundation in Scripture.
2. It is derived from the heathen, the Egyptians, Greeks and Romans.
3. It proceeds upon an entirely false view of the merits of Christ through which we are justified entirely or not at all.

That each person must make satisfaction for sins committed after baptism is contrary to the whole revealed plan of salvation. The blood of Jesus Christ "cleanses of all sins." The Roman Church has a mistaken view of justification.

4. Its practical effects have always been to demoralize the people and to put them in abject submission to the priest. The priest's main hold on the fears of the people is through this figment of purgatory.

What is the theory of those who teach that the soul is asleep after death?

They teach that the soul is unconscious and asleep till the resurrection. This idea is of heathen origin. There are texts in the Bible that speak of the death as

sleep and of dying as falling asleep, but this is figurative language. The body of the dead looks as if it were asleep, and like one who sleeps the dead shall rise again. But this language derived from the appearance of the body has no reference to the soul.

What is meant by second probation?

This is a theory that teaches that another opportunity for repentance and faith will be afforded to the souls who die without faith in Christ. This opportunity will be between death and resurrection, and will be given specially to those who have not heard of Christ in this world.

This theory is unscriptural, there is nothing for it and much against it. Luke 16: 26; Rom. 1: 32.

This theory would also destroy all missionary activity. There is no use to bring the gospel to the heathen now, if they will be tried in another world.

Can the dead have any communion with the living?

This idea the heathen have cherished, and was the cause of ancestor-worship. Roman Catholics also seem to think this is possible, to judge from their prayers to Mary and their saints.

Present day and ancient Spiritualism boasts that it can obtain communication with the souls of the dead in various ways.

The Bible, on the contrary, gives us not one particle of encouragement that we can commune with the departed, and through Moses God forbade Israel to seek necromancy or sorcery.

Deut. 18: 10, 11: "There shall not be found with thee any one that useth divination, one that practiseth augury, or an enchanter, or a sorcerer, or a charmer, or a consulter with a familiar spirit, or a wizard, or a necromancer."

Spiritualism contains many mysteries, some that seem to be facts, but also many deceptions. As long as there is no scientific basis to Spiritualism, no one can assure us what it is. God's Word warns us to abstain from all attempts to delve into secret things that have not been revealed.

Concerning the dead the Bible states that all communication between them and us is broken off.

Is. 63: 16: "For thou art our Father, though Abraham knoweth us not, and Israel doth not acknowledge us."

The state of the soul after death is a state of decision, the lot is decided, and the place is fixed. No one can leave his assigned place. Luke 16: 26.

In their respective places the souls of the dead wait the second coming of Christ, when all will temporarily leave their abode to be reunited with their bodies and publicly judged.

SECOND ADVENT OF CHRIST

Why do we speak of a second advent of Christ?

Because the Bible speaks of two advents of Christ. The first was when he humbled himself and became flesh. The second shall be the climax of his exaltation, when he comes to judge the living and the dead.

Will the second coming be at the end of the history of the world?

Yes, the present dispensation of grace shall then cease and the history of the world comes to an end. It shall be in every respect the fulness of time.

Christ's first coming was at the end of the Old Testament history, it completed this period. All things during the old day made ready for the first coming, so all things now are getting ready for the second coming.

Even natural science tells us this world can not last

forever, at length it will be exhausted. But how the end will come nature can not tell us. This the Bible does: Christ will come to separate the righteous from the unrighteous, and then in a great conflagration the world would be purified with fire. For this end the Church of Christ is looking with joy, and prays: "Come, Lord Jesus," for it will mean the complete deliverance and joy of the Church and the glory of God.

What assurance have we that Christ will come again?

Matt. 24:30: "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory."

Acts 1:11: "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? this Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld him going into heaven." See Rev. 1:7; Acts 3:21.

When will Christ come again?

This has not been revealed and very wisely has God withheld the knowledge of this time from us. We are told to be always ready, to watch and pray, for Christ will come as a thief in the night, suddenly and unexpectedly.

Many have attempted to determine the time of Christ's second coming, various dates have been set, but thus far always to the confusion and disappointment of those who made them. It is wrong to try to determine what God has purposely withheld.

Mark 13:32: "But of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

Will not, however, certain signs precede the coming of Christ?

Yes, Christ has plainly declared certain signs will

precede. Immediately after the death and resurrection of Christ certain signs were given, earthquakes and opening of graves, and since many signs of which he spoke have come, wars, pestilence, famines, earthquakes, these together with others are again to come and will multiply as the end draws near. Luke 21: 9-11.

The most important signs that Christ is coming will be:

1. The spreading of the gospel to all nations.
2. The return of the Jews to Christ.
3. The coming of many false prophets and pretended Messiahs, who will also work miracles and deceive many. Mark 13: 22.

4. Signs in nature. Luke 21: 25-27: "And there shall be signs in sun and moon and stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, in perplexity for the roaring of the sea and the billows; men fainting for fear and for expectation of the things which are coming on the world; for the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory."

All these things will be the travail of creation that precede the birth of the new heaven and earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

5. The coming of Anti-Christ, or the man of sin, the son of perdition.

II Thess. 2:3: "Let no man beguile you in any wise; for it will not be, except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; vs. 4, he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God or that is worshiped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God."

John calls this man of sin the Anti-Christ, I John 2: 18; 4: 2, 3.

Many conjectures have been made as to who the Anti-Christ is. Some formerly held that he was one of the Roman emperors or the Pope. A study of all the places referring to the Anti-Christ leads us to conclude that the Spirit of Anti-Christ has been and is now in the world, but that the person in whom this spirit is personified is yet to come. Satan is seeking to imitate God by incarnating himself in some human being, this will be a monster of iniquity, deceiving many with lying wonders. Thus far God has restrained him, but his attempts are apparent in the spirit of many who deny that Jesus is the Christ. See I John 4: 2, 3. Some day God will allow Satan to reveal himself in the "lawless one." II Thess. 2: 8. This monster will rage against Christ and his Church and in his time will be terrible persecutions. But when he has reached his height the "Lord Jesus shall slay him with the breath of his mouth, and bring to naught by the manifestation of his coming." II Thess. 2:8.

What will be the nature of Christ's second coming?

Scripture teaches that Christ will visibly appear, and all shall see him. He will be attended with the host of angels, with power and great glory. Matt 16: 27; 24: 30; 25: 31.

What is meant by the Premillennial advent of Christ?

This is a view held by many who teach that Christ will suddenly come and personally reign a thousand years in Jerusalem. This view is based on a literal explanation of Rev. 20: 2-7.

The advocates of this view differ among themselves very widely as to what this reign will be like, but usually agree on the following points:

1. That Christ will appear in great glory and establish his capitol in Jerusalem.
2. The resurrection of the saints will occur at this

coming, while the wicked will remain in their graves for a thousand years.

3. Translation of the saints who (like Enoch) are caught up to meet Christ in the air. This is called the Rapture.

4. Revelation of Christ and his saints in flaming fire to execute judgment on the earth. At the Revelation the millennial reign is begun.

5. Christ will visibly reign in Jerusalem with his saints, and the Jews, being his special people, will be exalted to preëminent dignity and privilege.

6. This reign will last one thousand years, called the millennium, and mankind in general then yet living will be converted, but humanity will still be subject to disease and death.

7. There will be no general judgment, but judgment will be in two parts; one before, and the one after the millennium. After the last judgment the world will be refitted and forever inhabited.

This view of a pre-millennial coming of Christ has found some advocates in the Reformed Churches, the majority, however, have not favored this view. They raise the following objections:

1. Scripture teaches that Christ will remain in heaven till the end of the world. Acts. 3:21; Heb. 10:12, 13; Luke 19:13.

2. Scripture teaches but one final judgment, of the righteous and the wicked together. The resurrection of all the dead, good and bad, occurs simultaneously. Then the Lord will send his angels to separate and place the righteous on his right hand and the evil doers on his left. Matt. 13:37-43; 16:27; 24; John 5:28, 29; I Cor. 3:12-15; II Thess. 1:6-10.

From these places we gather that there will not be

two advents, nor two resurrections and judgments, but only one, at the end of the world.

It is true the apostles sometimes write to the christians as if they alone were to be raised up at the coming of Christ. But this is done because they are writing to christians. Because they say nothing about the resurrection of the unrighteous in certain places, they do not therefore deny their resurrection. In other places they plainly teach the resurrection of both.

3. The resurrection of the saints will be of a spiritual body. I Cor. 15. The pre-millennial resurrection would be of a natural body, and those thus raised would live in a world where sin, sickness and death were not abolished. This seems very unreasonable and unscriptural. Or if it be taught that the saints shall be raised with spiritual bodies, it again seems unreasonable that those thus glorified should dwell in a world that was not yet purified.

Because of these difficulties most Reformed teachers do not give a literal interpretation to Rev. 20:2-7, but a spiritual, and then explain thus: "Christ has in reserve for his Church a period of universal expansion and preëminent spiritual prosperity, when the spirit and character of the noble army of martyrs shall be reproduced again in the great body of God's people in an unprecedented manner, and when these martyrs shall, in the general triumph of their cause, and in the overthrow of that of their enemies, receive judgment over their foes and reign in the earth; while the party of Satan, "the rest of the dead," shall not flourish again until the thousand years be ended, when it shall prevail again for a little season."—A. A. Hodge.

What should be the effect of the doctrine of Christ's second advent?

Believers should be comforted in sorrow, and ever stimulated to do their duty.

Col. 3:4: "When Christ, who is our life, shall be manifested, then shall ye also with him be manifested in glory." Vs. 5, "Put to death therefore your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desires, and covetousness, which is idolatry."

Unbelievers should be filled with fear and seek immediately a place for repentance.

Mark 13:35: "Watch therefore; for ye know not when the Lord of the house cometh." II Pet. 2:9, 10.

RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

What will be the first important occurrence at the second coming of Christ?

The resurrection of the bodies of the dead.

John 5:28, 29: "Marvel not at this; for the hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment."

I Thess. 4:16: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first."

Is our faith in the resurrection of the dead gained from nature?

No, it is gained from and rests on the teaching of the Bible. The heathen, who have only God's revelation in nature, have nearly all looked for a continuance of the existence of the soul after death, but did not think of the resurrection of the bodies of the dead. It is impossible to prove the resurrection of the dead from nature. It is an article of faith.

Is the resurrection of the dead taught in both the Old and New Testaments?

Yes, in the Old Testament.

Dan. 12:2: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt."

Isa. 26:19: "Thy dead shall live; my dead bodies shall arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust; for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast forth the dead."

In the New Testament there is abundant reference to the resurrection. Matt. 22:23-32; Luke 14:14; Luke 20:35-38; John 6:39-54; Acts 17:18, 32; 24:14, 15; Rom. 8:19-23; I Cor. 15:12-57; Phil. 3:21, etc.

Will all arise, the unrighteous as well as the righteous?

Yes, in the resurrection of the righteous Christ will complete his redemption, for the bodies of the saints are his as well as their souls; and in the resurrection of the unrighteous he will manifest his justice, for their bodies as well as their souls share in punishment.

Will the same bodies rise that have been buried?

Yes, the Scriptures teach this: "All that are in the graves shall hear his voice," John 5:28. The corruptible must put on incorruption, and our vile bodies shall be changed into the likeness of Christ's glorious body, I Cor. 15:53, Phil. 3:28, but it will yet ever be our own body. Our resurrection is to be like that of Christ, which was of his identical body.

It is not necessary, however, to look for the resurrection of every part and atom of the bodies that were buried. Many particles of the bodies of the dead have been scattered and become parts of the bodies of others, after being assimilated by vegetables and animals.

If each person were to receive the same particles constituting his body when he dies, it would be a question often to which person various particles must be given.

But let us remember that bodily identity does not consist in the sameness of every constituting part. Thus there is not a particle in the body of an old man that belonged to him in his youth. The body is ever subject to changes in size, form, condition, and science even declares that every seven years there is an entire change of constituting particles in our bodies. Yet we say that the bodies of our childhood are ours in later life. This proves that identity need not mean sameness of particles. What is necessary is that the same *formative principle of life* should remain.

Paul illustrates the resurrection of the bodies by referring to the coming forth of the new seed out of the old, the old dies, yet the germ of life is perpetuated in the new seed. I Cor. 15:36, 37.

Will the bodies of the righteous and the unrighteous be alike at the resurrection?

No, there will be a great difference. Scripture says very little about the bodies of the unrighteous. They will awake to everlasting shame and contempt. Dan. 12:2. All beauty and attractiveness will be lost.

Of the bodies of the righteous more is said. They will be like Christ's body, Phil. 3:21; will be glorious, incorruptible and powerful, I Cor. 15:54; will be spiritual, in distinction from the present bodies, which are called natural, I Cor. 15:44. The spiritual body is a body indwelt by the Holy Spirit, who fits it for the moral and physical conditions of the heavenly world.

What will occur to those still living at the second coming of Christ?

These will not first die and then be raised up, but

shall be changed in an instant to be like those raised from the dead.

I Cor. 15:51, 52: "Behold, I tell you a mystery; we all shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump."

I Thess. 4:16, 17: "And the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

What should the future resurrection of our bodies mean for us?

1. It should be a great comfort for the believer that his whole existence shall once be entirely rescued from death. "Death shall be swallowed up in victory."

2. It should lead to a proper appreciation of our bodies in the present. We recognize that this corruptible cannot inherit incorruptible glory, but bodies of believers are temples of the Holy Spirit and shall once be with Christ. On the other hand, poor is the unbeliever; he has no hope, no promise to base any expectation on, he must end in despairing pessimism.

FINAL JUDGMENT AND THE ETERNAL STATE OF ALL CREATURES

What will follow the resurrection of the dead?

The final judgment.

II Cor. 5:10: "For we must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

Who is to be the judge?

Jesus Christ, the Mediator, who will appear in both his divine and human natures.

Matt. 16:27: "For the Son of man shall come in the

glory of his Father with his angels; and then shall he render unto every man according to his deeds." Acts 17:31; Rom. 14:9; Rev. 22:12.

All judgment is said to be committed by the Father to the Son, through whom he will accomplish the restitution of all things. Acts 3:21. Christ has been given all power in heaven and earth, he is Lord of both the dead and the living. In the final judgment he will manifest his authority by completing the salvation of his people and by overthrowing the power of his enemies. He will appear in great glory to the joy of the redeemed and the terror of the wicked.

What will the angels do in the last judgment?

They will carry out the sentence of the Judge by separating the saints from the wicked.

Matt. 13:49: "So shall it be in the end of the world; the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the righteous, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire."

Matt. 24:31: "And he shall send forth his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

In what sense will the saints judge the world?

The saints are heirs with Christ, are in eternal union with him, and as they suffer with him, they shall also triumph and rule with him. All the saints will assent to Christ's judgment and glory therein. I Cor. 6:2: "Or know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" Vs. 3, "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" Matt. 19:28; Rev. 19:1-5.

Who are to be the subjects of the final judgment?

Every human being that has ever lived, of every

time and place and race. All who have died and all alive at the second advent.

Matt. 25:32: "And before him shall be gathered all the nations."

Rev. 20:12: "And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne." I Cor. 15:51, 52; I Thess. 4:17.

The evil angels will also be judged.

II Peter 2:4: "For if God spared not angels when they sinned, but cast them down to hell, and committed them to pits of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment."

According to what principles will Christ pronounce judgment?

According to the principles revealed in Holy Scripture, according to both law and gospel.

All will be tried by the standards of God's revealed will. They who have not known this revelation "shall be judged without the law," e.g., not according to the revealed law in the Bible, but according to the law written upon their hearts. The Jew, who sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law. Rom. 2:12. Everyone living in the full light of Christian revelation shall be judged according to his privileges. It will be more tolerable for the heathen in the day of judgment than for those brought up in the Church of God, but who reject his will.

Luke 12:48: "And to whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom they commit much, of him will they ask the more."

The secrets of every heart will be considered, and not only the openly expressed words and deeds.

Rom. 2:16: "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men, according to my gospel, by Jesus Christ."

To what place are the lost assigned in the final judgment?

To a place called *Hades* or *Gehenna*, both translated hell.

As descriptive of the nature of this place it is called: Everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, Matt. 24:41; Hell of fire, where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched, Mark 9:44; Lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, Rev. 21:8; Bottomless pit, Rev. 9:12; Blackness of darkness, Jude 13; Torment in fire and brimstone, Rev. 14:10, 11.

These terms are evidently figurative, but from them we learn that the punishment of the wicked will consist:

1. In the loss of all that is good and pleasant.
2. In the separation from God and his people.
3. In the society of lost men and devils.
4. In suffering torments in soul and body, caused by the wrath of God and the remorse of conscience.

What will be the duration of this punishment?

Scripture teaches that it will be endless.

Matt. 25:41: "Then shall he say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels."

II Thess. 1:19: "Who shall suffer punishment, even eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might."

The same word is used in the Bible to express the endless duration of the future happiness of the saints and to express the endless duration of the punishment of the wicked.

Matt. 25:46: "And these shall go away into eternal punishment; but the righteous into eternal life."

Many refuse to believe the teaching of Scripture on

this point, or they seek to give a meaning to the words of Scripture whereby a universal deliverance from hell is taught. But the question here is one of fact, based on the plain teachings of Scripture, and not one of theory. The only way of knowing the fact is to accept the declaration of One who knows the future. It is indeed a solemn, alarming, fearful truth, but we must hold it, if we take the Scriptures the rule of our faith. The undermining of the doctrine of endless punishment upsets the whole doctrine of sin and redemption.

What is the fault of those who deny the doctrine of endless punishment?

1. They have a wrong conception of sin, which they hold to be only a defect or a weakness, and to which, of course, no punishment would be due. The Bible, on the contrary, speaks of sin as unrighteousness, as an assault upon the majesty of God.

2. They have a wrong conception of the chief purpose of man, which they hold to be happiness. The Bible teaches man's chief end ought to be holiness, to be consecrated to God.

3. They have a wrong conception of God, whom they represent as if he were only love, but our Catechism rightly reminds that "God is indeed merciful, but also just; therefore his justice requires that sin, which is committed against the most high majesty of God, be also punished with extreme, that is, with everlasting punishment, both of body and soul." Ques. 11.

No creature ought to pretend to be more merciful than God. He is revealed as infinite love, and to the Son, who is the highest manifestation of love, has been committed all judgment. Let us be sure he will make no mistakes, but will execute divine justice in such a way

that all will have to justify his sentences at last. Before him every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that he is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Who oppose the doctrine of endless punishment?

1. The Universalists. They teach that all are made heirs of eternal life, or a universal salvation. Suffering for sin, they declare, is endured in this life. They make, much of the statement that God is not willing that any should perish, and that Christ tasted death for every man. Their explanation of these expressions is wrong, and their theory in plain opposition to the statement that the Lord Jesus shall be revealed in flaming fire, taking vengeance on those that know not God.

2. The Restorationists. They teach there is a future punishment, but it is not eternal. Most of those in the Universalist denomination hold this theory. Our answer to the former question as to the duration of punishment meets this theory.

3. The Annihilationists. They teach life means existence, death non-existence. Death is punishment of sin, therefore they who die in sin will be annihilated, extinguished. Together with this theory goes that which teaches that there is a conditional immortality, that is, that those who believe shall live, exist, while others are entirely destroyed. Continuance of existence or immortality depends or is conditioned on faith.

Against this is the Bible statement that death is not annihilation, for death is torment, and all are said to be immortal. The Scriptures know nothing of annihilation.

To what place will the saints of God be assigned after the final judgment?

To the new heaven and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. II Pet. 3: 13; Rev. 21: 5.

After the last judgment there will be a renewing of all things. Many have held that this earth would be annihilated, but this view is now commonly given up in favor of the opinion that teaches the restitution of all things. Acts 3:21: "Whom the heavens must receive until the times of restoration of all things."

At present the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain, it is in bondage of corruption and subjected to vanity, and waits for the revealing of the Sons of God, when it will share in the liberty of the glory of the children of God. Rom. 8: 19-22.

The most probable explanation is that this earth with its atmosphere is to be subjected to intense heat, whereby it will be radically changed and prepared to be the new world that is suited to the resurrection bodies of the saints and the city of God.

The saints will thus inherit a regenerated earth as well as heaven.

Where is heaven?

We do not know definitely. We can say heaven is where the glory of God is specially manifested, where the human nature of Christ is, and where the angels and saints are. John 17: 24; Rev. 5: 6.*

What terms does Scripture use to designate the future blessedness of the saints?

It is called: eternal and everlasting life, Matt. 19:16; 28: 46; the glory of God, Rom. 5: 2; eternal salvation, Heb. 5: 9.

* Heaven is a place, although some have defined it as only a state. Heaven as a place is the same as Paradise. (Compare II Cor. 12: 4, with II Cor. 12: 2, and Rev. 2: 7 compared with Rev. 22: 2). There Christ went, Luke 23: 43, to his Father's House with its many mansions. John 14: 2.

Other terms are Paradise, Luke 23: 43; Kingdom of God and heavenly kingdom, Matt. 25: 34; II Pet. 1: 11; Eternal inheritance, I Pet. 1: 4; Sabbath or rest, Heb. 4: 10, 11.

Wherein does the blessedness of heaven consist?

The Bible speaks of this blessedness in a negative as well as in a positive way. To contrast this blessedness with the conditions of this earth it declares: "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat." Rev. 7: 16.

"And he shall wipe away every tear from their eyes; and death shall be no more; neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain, any more." Rev. 21: 4.

There will be material as well as spiritual blessings, but the spiritual are most prominent. "Beloved, now are we the children of God, and it is not yet manifest what we shall be. We know that if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." I John 3: 2.

This seeing the Lord and transformation like him will be the special blessedness of heaven. Being like the Lord will mean: 1) that we shall be like him in character and in full accord with him: 2) that our nature shall be perfected, so that all our powers and faculties shall be developed and work in perfect harmony. The image of God shall be restored.

Another cause of blessedness will be the perfect communion of saints, none of whom shall be lacking, and there shall be one flock under one Shepherd. They shall be gathered from every direction, and shall sit with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. All shall wear white robes

of purity, the weary of earth shall have rest in their Father's home, and earth's sorrowing disciples shall waken notes of joy from harps of gold.

The personal peculiarities of earth will be retained. There will be no dull conformity of all to one type, but variety in unity, and all together will reflect the likeness of God, whose name will be written upon every forehead.

In regard to the occupation of the saints Scripture says very little. The future state is beyond our present comprehension, and so we are not told very much about it. The saints will rest from their labors, from the troubles and struggles of this life, but it will not be a rest that will be the same as idleness. God ever works, and we shall have work in harmony with our new nature and our new surroundings.

Rev. 5: 9, 10: "And they sing a new song, saying, Worthy art thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest them to be unto our God a kingdom and priests; and they reign upon the earth."

(Comment continued from page 159.) /

That the kingdom of our Lord is not future, but is already present is shown from such expressions as Luke 17: 20, 21, and Matt 21: 43. Compare Luke 9: 27.

It is unbiblical to hold that Christ is not the King of his Church in a juridical sense, but only in an organic one. The Greek word "head" does not exclude the idea of ruler at all; since the head rules the body. Ps. 2:6 declares, "Have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion", and this Zion, in Heb. 12: 22 is identified with the (N. T.) Church of the firstborn. Consequently, if the church is identified with Mount Zion, it is evident that Christ is already "set" as King over the Church. Our Lord is now on David's throne, made both Lord and Christ, Acts 2: 29-36. Compare Ans. 31, of the Heidelberg Catechism, calling Christ "Our Eternal King". Also Shorter Catechism, Q. 26.

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